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JUBAL ANDERSON EARLY: GLORY TO IGNOMINY
HIS SHENANDOAH VALLEY CAMPAIGN

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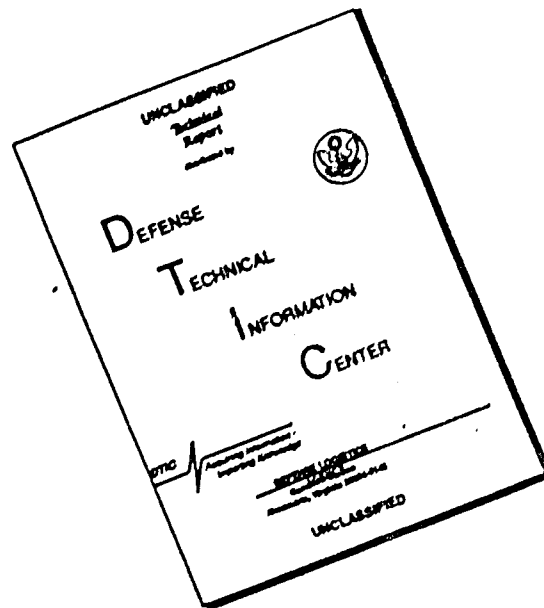
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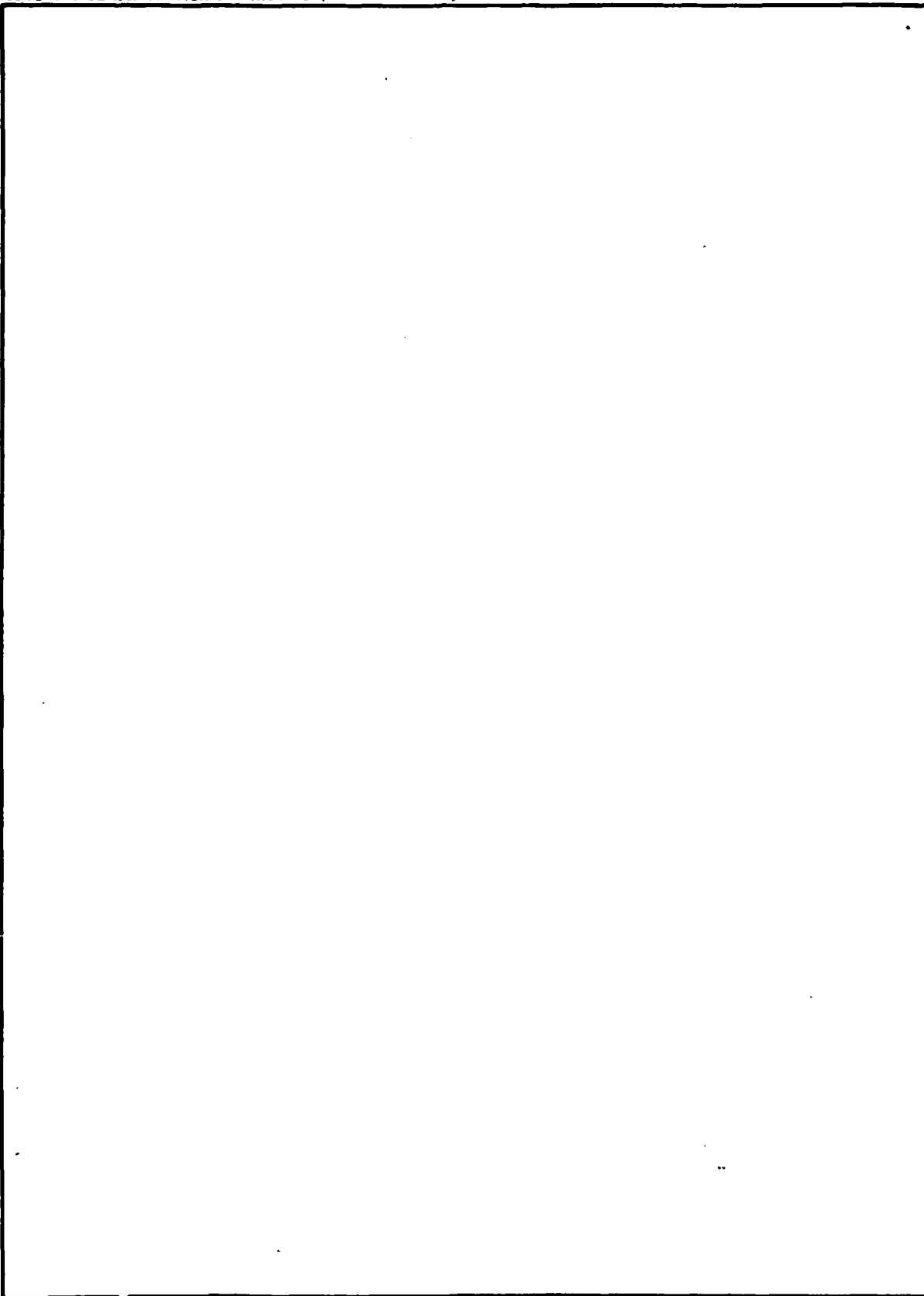
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JUBAL ANDERSON EARLY: GLORY TO IGNOMINY

HIS SHENANDOAH VALLEY CAMPAIGN

by

Captain Terry R. Moss

A Thesis submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts
in the Department of History

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1981

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TERRY RAY MOSS. Jubal Anderson Early: Glory to Ignominy--His Shenandoah Valley Campaign (Under the direction of FRANK W. KLINGBERG.)

In June 1864 Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant's Union army held General Robert E. Lee's Confederate army in a vise-like grip at Petersburg. The siege had only one outcome unless the Confederates could weaken Grant's hold. Lee sent Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early to the Shenandoah Valley to pressure Union forces there and subsequently, to threaten Washington, D.C.

Upon his repulse from the Federal capital, Early returned to the Valley. His further operations compelled Grant to send 40,000 soldiers under Major General Philip Sheridan to defeat him. By March 1865, Early's army was destroyed.

Although several factors ordained this defeat, perhaps the most damaging was Early himself. His inflexible nature may have prevented him from adjusting to the complications of independent command. Nevertheless, Early's campaign accomplished its primary mission of drawing Union soldiers from Petersburg to prolong the war. This prolongation could have possibly prevented Abraham Lincoln's reelection and have ended the war differently.

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CONTENTS

PREFACE	111
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iv
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. EARLY'S RESCUE MISSION	12
III. A VISIT TO LINCOLN	23
IV. THE IRISH SAVIOR	47
V. WAS IT WORTH IT?	74
VI. SEEDS OF DEFEAT	84
VII. THE FINAL ROLL CALL	103
APPENDIX: DIAGRAMS	106
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY: WORKS CITED	117

for Bonnie
who suffered through countless enactments
of the "Lost Cause"

PREFACE

The American Civil War produced several campaigns and characters replete with all the drama, comedy, sacrifice, and tragedy of a Shakespearean play. From June 1864 until March 1865 the Shenandoah Valley of western Virginia served as one of these landscapes. The central figure was one of the most perplexing personalities of the conflict--a man destined during the course of the war to ascend to the highest levels of commendation and to plummet to the lowest depths of condemnation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To render thanks to all due such an accolade seems trite in such an academic effort as this thesis. However, not to acknowledge my debt to others would be a vain deception promising only embarrassment and disgrace.

My first gratitude must go to my wife, Bonnie, who gave inspiration and lent fortitude when despair crept upon me. Secondly, I thank Dr. Frank W. Klingberg, who took genuine interest in this enterprise and expertly advised me in my tortuous path to understanding the complex personality of Jubal Early. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the staffs at Wilson Library, the University of North Carolina; the Perkins Library, Duke University; and the North Carolina Archives in Raleigh. Without their able guidance my efforts would have foundered on the seas of aimlessness and naivety.



LIEUTENANT GENERAL JUBAL A. EARLY, C.S.A.

The noble sire fallen on evil days
I saw with hand uplifted, menacing, brandishing
(Memories of old in abeyance, love and faith in abeyance)
The insane knife toward the Mother of All

--Walt Whitman

"Virginia--The West"

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

On 30 March 1865, Lieutenant General Jubal Anderson Early received from General Robert E. Lee a telegraphic dispatch directing him to relinquish his command in southwest Virginia to Brigadier General John Echols and his command in the Shenandoah Valley to Major General Lunsford L. Lomax. Additionally, Early's superior instructed him to return to his home in Rocky Mount, Virginia where he would receive a personal explanation. After a delay due to a lung hemorrhage, Early arrived home and, after a short interval, received Lee's letter.¹ In part the letter asserted,

The situation of affairs is such that we can neglect no means calculated to develop the resources we possess to the greatest extent, and make them as efficient as possible. To this end it is essential that we should have the cheerful and hearty support of the people, and the full confidence of the soldiers. . . . I have reluctantly arrived at the conclusion that you cannot command the united and willing cooperation which is so essential to success. Your reverses in the Valley . . . have impaired your influence both with the people and the soldiers. While my own confidence in your ability, zeal, and devotion to the cause is unimpaired, I have nevertheless felt that I could not oppose what seems to be the current of opinion. . . . I thought it proper to yield my own opinion, and to defer to that of those to whom alone we can look for support.²

Thus, nine days before the death knell of Lee's Army of Northern Virginia, Early's long and distinguished military career experienced perhaps the most traumatic calamity a professional soldier can endure--relief from

command for causes detrimental to the service. Thirty years later when Early died this infamy had long since transformed to public adulation.³ In the gloom and despair which gripped the South in the early spring of 1865, however, "Old Jube"⁴ certainly entertained no visions of that uncertain future. For this tragic hero, the dismal present held only sorrow. His long-honored, turbulent fighting career had pathetically closed.

After the war, Early emerged as an active participant in the zealous romanticism of the Lost Cause. Nevertheless, "Old Jube's" autobiography surprisingly appears to be a nonpartisan narrative which reveals his puzzling, even eccentric personality: cynical, witty, ambitious, self-reliant, practical, unbearably acidic, unquestionably loyal, aggressively bold. His physical appearance, except for the stoop caused by the rheumatism he contracted in the Mexican War, reflected his essence perfectly. Approximately six feet tall and in his late forties during the Civil War, Early had a rugged face and snapping black eyes that revealed the tenacity and audacity of a resolute battler. A nonconformist in an officer corps constituted principally of genteel, finely attired aristocrats struggling "to preserve their cavalier image," "Old Jube" dressed simply. His standard uniform consisted of a great gray coat; an ancient, white slouch hat adorned with a black plume; and the inevitable canteen. Constantly chewing tobacco,⁵ Early produced an impression of disarray within an ocean of gentility. However, this effect was not the only factor which caused friction between him and his fellow officers.

Possessed with explicit opinions, Early generally did not hesitate to express them in a brusque, cynical, or satirical manner which usually offended superiors, peers, and subordinates alike. One acquaintance

wrote he was "like a porcupine's quills stick[ing] out aggressively in all directions."⁶ This blunt nature, coupled with his refusal to placate civilian authorities politely, additionally identified him as an anomaly in the officer corps to which he belonged. Frank beyond even rudeness, Early habitually spiced his conversation with language which made sailors cringe. This profanity rarely failed to impress those unfortunate enough to be its recipients.⁷ Finally, mordant and cynical though he was, "Old Jube" did possess a keen sense of humor.⁸ Rarely did such wit endear him to its victims, however.

In spite of Early's acerbic personality, only a rare individual doubted his fighting abilities.⁹ Involved in every major action in which the Army of Northern Virginia dueled, from First Manassas to Petersburg, Early fought with an intensity rarely equaled by any general on either side.¹⁰ At Second Manassas, "Old Jube," instead of withdrawing after his regiments depleted their ammunition, inspired his soldiers to remain in position and hurl stones at the advancing Federals.¹¹ Cited on numerous occasions by his superiors for tenacious bravery, Early earned the continual admiration of his subordinates. They would never honor him with devotion because of his caustic nature, but they would respect him for his aggressiveness and, more importantly, for his unequalled record of success. Perhaps his unrestrained hatred of Union soldiers ignited this capacity to fight.¹² Whatever the reason, when the summer of 1864 arrived and brought with it Grant's grinding war of attrition, Robert E. Lee held few misgivings that his curt, tenacious "soldier's soldier"¹³ could not manage the independent assignment designed by Lee to alleviate the desperate situation created by the Union siege at Petersburg.

During the Civil War, the Shenandoah Valley offered significant

strategic and logistic advantages to both adversaries, directly for the Confederacy, and conversely, indirectly for the Union. The Valley has two important military features: it is flanked on either side by rugged, heavily wooded mountains pierced only by narrow gaps at infrequent intervals, and it is situated in a southwest to northeast direction that allowed movement from the South directly into Northern command, population, and industrial centers, yet did not permit a direct Northern invasion into the South's similar centers (see diagram 1). As a principal source of food and forage for Southern armies in Virginia, the Valley had no equal. Its transportation systems facilitated tactical and strategic maneuver.¹⁴ The Valley's railroad networks sanctioned rapid east-west troop transfers which had enabled Southern armies to concentrate and defeat the adversary during the first three years of the war. The internal road system, crowned by a macadamized north-south turnpike, in conjunction with gentle, rolling terrain interspersed with several small streams emptying into the Shenandoah River, allowed rapid but hidden movement. Ideally suited for cavalry operations, this area also facilitated the guerrilla-style warfare so effectively conducted by Confederate irregular forces. In 1862 and 1863 Southern operations had demonstrated the importance the Valley held for both participants; 1864 would manifest no difference.

On 3 May 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant's Army of the Potomac crossed the Rapidan River and marched south. Grant intended to wage a war of attrition which would ultimately lead to Lee's surrender.¹⁵ Tactical victories in May and early June belonged to the Confederates; however, Grant's army, though slowed and bloodied, inexorably moved through the meatgrinder that culminated in the horrors of trench warfare

at Petersburg. To critical thinkers on both sides, it had become obvious that Southern independence gained by battle was no longer possible. Simple mathematics guaranteed that fact. Nevertheless, Confederate leaders still clung to the belief that independence could be attained if the Democratic Party could win the 1864 U.S. presidential election.¹⁶

To a considerable portion of the northern populace, Grant's method of warfare, with its apparently never-ending carnage, seemed to guarantee only a stalemate. Mounting casualties stirred indignant shock waves throughout the nation. Grant's average losses exceeded 1,000 men per day, a figure three times that of his Confederate adversary.¹⁷ Politically, this situation harbored disaster for Lincoln's future as the 1864 presidential election loomed. The North's political atmosphere reflected the disharmony, factionalism, and weariness produced by the war. Radical Republicans' anti-Lincoln sentiment and opposition increased rapidly. The Secretary of the Navy rued the resulting "envenomed spirit of party" which threatened not only to disrupt the party, but to destroy the country.¹⁸ The Democrats also split into factions, the "War Democrats," who favored Lincoln's war policy, and the "Peace Democrats," the "Copperheads," who advocated a negotiated peace. A probable compromise between them could produce a Democratic president and lead to an armistice which, in turn, could result in a negotiated peace yielding Confederate independence.¹⁹

The administration had to confront ever-growing difficulties dissipating the country's morale and eroding the will to win. During the spring and early summer of 1864 national attention focused on unofficial "peace" negotiations. Although these maneuvers offered no tangible evidence of halting the hostilities, President Lincoln could not ignore

them. A drained public was eager to grasp at any opportunity promising the war's cessation. Anger induced by military failure produced behind-the-scenes activities. Plots abounded in which subversive groups maneuvered to seize control of various portions of the country. Finally, to complicate the murky milieu further, Confederate Secret Service operators developed situations to exploit Lincoln's woes. All these events combined to corrode the president's political stature to such an extent that the New York Herald, admittedly a partisan newspaper, stated, "Lincoln is a joke incarnate."²⁰

Despite the public's apprehensions and accusations, the Union strategy was succeeding. Although Grant expended men as if this act of human carnage signified nothing more than swatting flies, the Army of the Potomac was fatally bleeding its Southern counterpart. Equally important, Grant's veterans clutched the Army of Northern Virginia in an iron vise which apparently denied Lee the capability for offensive operations. Nevertheless, in spite of these successes, the war-weary populace could not grasp their significances; it perceived only that the mangled corpses lying in rapidly expanding military cemeteries had been squandered. If this perception continued, the northern electorate could be propelled into making irrational demands for peace at any price.²¹

To exploit the Union weakness, the Confederacy had to overcome a major obstacle: time was running short. In order to achieve a respite, it was necessary to retard Grant's advance. Lee pondered a bold gamble to detach a major portion of his besieged army, move it to the Shenandoah Valley, and, if possible, deploy it northward to menace Washington.²²

The Union capital represented a prize that promised incalculable benefits to the Confederacy's war effort. Washington was not only the

political symbol of the Union, but also housed important military activities. It contained Federal command, logistical, and communications centers which directed orders, supplies, and men into the various war theaters. A successful expedition against the city could result in the capture of key government and military figures. Primed for the torch or seizure would be the Navy Yard, the Treasury with its millions in negotiable bonds and currency, and, most importantly, the warehouses stocked with tons of necessities for the Army of the Potomac. The Quartermaster Department alone maintained a six-acre site that contained eleven million dollars' worth of war supplies, extensive repair shops, and machinery.²³ As one military authority stated, if Grant's army lost its logistical base, "the war [would] halt, if not stop for good and all."²⁴

Lee knew that the fear of losing Washington haunted Lincoln and Congress; its defense remained firmly fixed in Union plans and command decisions. In the war's first three years Confederate feints and invasions had drawn Union troops from field operations to the capital's breastworks. This fact swayed Lee's decision. He calculated that a similar move would compel Grant to detach some of his army investing Petersburg in order to counter the Confederate expedition.²⁵ This Federal reaction would weaken the Army of the Potomac, open it to counter-attack by Lee's army, and prolong the conflict to the possible detriment of Lincoln's political career. More importantly, if for some unforeseen and foolish reason, Grant did not react, his army's combat capabilities could suddenly cease if Washington was captured.

On 4 June 1864, President Davis confirmed Jubal Early's promotion to Lieutenant General. Lee subsequently awarded "Old Jube" with the

permanent command of Second Corps, Army of Northern Virginia.²⁶ The next day Lee received a disheartening telegram from Confederate forces in the Shenandoah Valley. A Union army under Major General David Hunter had "badly whipped" the Valley's small Rebel contingent and had slain its commander, Brigadier General William E. ("Grumble") Jones.²⁷ Lee dispatched on 7 June Major General John Breckinridge's small division of 2,100 men with instructions to stop Hunter.²⁸ Subsequent small-scale operations soon revealed that Breckinridge's division was inadequate for this task. The Confederates had discovered that Hunter commanded 18,000 men.²⁹

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

1. Jubal A. Early, Memoir of the Last Year of the War for Independence in the Confederate States of America (Lynchburg, Va.: Charles W. Button, 1867), pp. 128-129. Lee sent the telegram on 29 March. General Robert E. Lee to Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early, 29 March 1865, Jubal A. Early Papers, vol. 4, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

2. Early, Memoir, Appendix A.

3. "General Jubal A. Early Dead," New York Times, 3 March 1894, p. 1.

4. Millard K. Bushong, Old Jube (Boyce, Va.: Carr Publishing Co., 1955), title. Early's soldiers bestowed this appellation upon him.

5. Edward J. Stackpole, Sheridan in the Shenandoah (Harrisburg, Pa.: The Stackpole Co., 1961), p. 8; William C. Davis, "Jubilee," Civil War Times Illustrated 9, no. 8 (1970): 11; Bushong, pp. 24, 187. While Early was reputedly fond of applejack, none of my research revealed conclusive evidence he imbibed during a battle.

6. Jabez Lamar Curry to his children, 7 August 1879, Jabez Lamar Curry Letters, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

7. Dennis V. Golladay, "Jubal Early's Last Stand," Virginia Cavalade 20, no. 1 (1970): 28.

8. At the Battle of Fredericksburg, Early reportedly stopped a fleeing, terrified chaplain and asked him where he was going. The chaplain responded that he was seeking refuge in the rear. Early replied, "Chaplain, I have known you for the past thirty years, and all that time you have been trying to get to Heaven, and now that the opportunity is offered you are fleeing from it!" W. T. McCarty, "Jubal A. Early to One of His Chaplains," Confederate Veteran 13, no. 10 (1905): 459.

9. Lieutenant General James Longstreet rated Early overall the weakest general officer in Lee's army. James Longstreet, From Manassas to Appomattox (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1896), p. 337. Longstreet began this censure once Early, true to his nature, initiated frequent and heated criticisms of Longstreet's actions at Gettysburg. Longstreet wrote that Early "loved" him as the "Devil does holy water." James Longstreet to Thomas Munford, 8 November 1891, Munford-Ellis Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Despite the vehemency of this feud, not even Longstreet criticized Early's martial capabilities.

10. Frank E. Vandiver, Jubal's Raid (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. 21.

11. Lawrence S. Marye, "General Jubal Anderson Early," The Southern Magazine (Louisville) 4 (1894): 469.

12. After the Battle of Fredericksburg, Early allegedly remarked to Generals Lee and Hampton that he wished all Federals were dead. Lee rebuked him for this statement. After Lee departed, Early added, "I not only wish them all dead but I wish them all in Hell." Jubal A. Early to D. H. Hill, 2 August 1885, Daniel H. Hill Papers, North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C. Upon being questioned whether he would attend Philip Sheridan's funeral, Early bitinglly replied, he ". . . would gladly attend the funeral of the last damned one of them." "An Ex-Confederate Waves the Bloody Shirt," New York Tribune, 8 October 1888, p. 3.

13. Davis, p. 48.

14. Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 143.

15. Matthew F. Steele, American Campaigns, 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Byron S. Adams, 1909), 1:472.

16. Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 3.

17. United States War Department, The War of Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies (Washington, D.C., 1880-1901), series 1, vol. 36, pt. 1, p. 22; pt. 3, p. 598. Hereinafter cited as Official Records.

18. Gideon Welles, Diary, 3 vols., with an Introduction by John T. Morse, Jr. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1909-1911), 1:211.

19. Allan Nevins, The War for the Union, vol. 8: The Organized War to Victory, 1864-1865 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971), p. 99.

20. Richard N. Current and J. G. Randall, Lincoln the President, vol. 4: Last Full Measure (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1955), pp. 89-90, 138, 150, 204.

21. Nevins, pp. 45, 65.

22. Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 5.

23. Vandiver, pp. 99, 123-124, 135.

24. Lew Wallace, Autobiography, 2 vols. (New York: n.p., 1906), 2:731.

25. Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 5.

26. Special Order no. [n.q.], 4 June 1864, Ewell-Brown-Polk Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. The previous corps commander, Lieutenant General Richard S. ("Old Baldy") Ewell, "Stonewall" Jackson's successor, could no longer tolerate severe field operations because of health complications. Early had been serving as the temporary commander since mid-May. Memorandum, War Department, C.S.A., Rare Book Room, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

27. Brigadier General John C. Vaughn to General Robert E. Lee, Military Telegrams, 5 June 1864, Jefferson Davis Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

28. Douglas S. Freeman, ed., Lee's Dispatches: Unpublished Letters of General Robert E. Lee, C.S.A. to Jefferson Davis and the War Department of the Confederate States of America (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915), no. 119, p. 217.

29. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, pp. 94-96.

CHAPTER II
EARLY'S RESCUE MISSION

The Union army was devastating the Shenandoah Valley. As they marched south, up the Valley, Hunter's men destroyed railroad lines and facilities, mills, factories, crops, and private and public structures.¹ Their ultimate destination was perhaps the most important trophy in western Virginia. The town of Lynchburg served as the primary communications, logistical, and production center in the region. Its transportation networks furnished means to move troops swiftly throughout the Confederacy. The city's warehouses stocked all types of commissary and quartermaster supplies for Lee's army; its medical facilities provided convalescent care to the Army of Northern Virginia.² Lee realized he could not allow Hunter to capture Lynchburg. Additionally, a successful rescue mission could lead to the strategic diversion against Washington. Jefferson Davis concurred with Lee that with Stonewall Jackson dead, the next best man available to command this operation was Jubal Early.³ Subsequently, Early and his Second Corps received orders on 12 June to move to the Shenandoah Valley. At 2:00 A.M. 13 June 1864 the Second Corps departed Petersburg to undertake Lee's gamble. It had 8,000 infantrymen supported by two battalions of artillery.⁴

Early recognized the personal implications of his assignment. It offered boundless opportunity, yet frightening responsibility. To succeed, his men would have to expend inhuman levels of energy and rely

completely upon three bloody years of experience.⁵ Only Early and his division commanders knew their destination. One uninformed but carefree soldier wrote his father that his unit traveled "the road to who knows where." However, he did not worry since "Early would carry the war to Africa to beat the Yankees" if necessary.⁶ Lee, to prevent Union agents from learning of this troop displacement, had taken measures to maintain secrecy. He even asked President Davis to suppress the newspapers' knowledge of this operation, a task which the Confederate leadership had loathed to attempt prior to this time.⁷

Late on the sixteenth, after severe marching, Early's force reached the Rivanna River near Charlottesville. The remarkable "foot cavalry" had traveled eighty miles in just four days.⁸ However, the pace, coupled with weather exposure, scant food, and fatigue from the constant fighting over the past two weeks, exhausted Early's men and horses. One of "Old Jube's" brigade commanders informed his wife that the march had enfeebled his men beyond effective combat efficiency.⁹ An artilleryman wrote his wife that weakened horse teams could not pull the artillery pieces.¹⁰

At Charlottesville Early learned from Breckinridge that Hunter was only twenty miles from Lynchburg. Subsequently, "Old Jube" wired Lee that his corps would travel by rail to cover the sixty-mile journey to the threatened city.¹¹ However, trains were not available until sunrise the next day, and then, only enough arrived to transport one-half of the infantrymen. Major General Stephen Ramseur's entire division, and portions of Major General John Gordon's division boarded the cars and chugged toward Lynchburg. Early ordered Major General Robert Rodes' division and Gordon's residue to march along the track until they met the train returning from the city. The corps' remaining elements, the

artillery and wagon trains, departed by road at daylight.¹²

Fortunately for Early problems plagued Hunter also. A small Rebel cavalry force under Brigadier General John McCausland had delayed the Federal army for several hours. Heat, conflicting reports, and his own indecisiveness added to the Union general's vexation. As a result the army advanced only seven miles on the sixteenth. That night Hunter's irresolution began to dominate his martial spirit. Growing increasingly cautious, he ordered the army's two-hundred-wagon supply train to move northward as a precaution against danger.¹³ Evidently, Hunter's fears were driving him along that dismal road to defeat. Unhappily for an organized armed body, a commander's misgivings are generally contagious; Hunter's affliction infected his soldiers. Daylight on the seventeenth did not reveal a confident Federal army moving southward.

Due to unsatisfactory rail conditions, Early's advance force did not reach Lynchburg until 1:00 P.M. 17 June. Prior to arriving "Old Jube" feared the delay would doom the city. However, the Confederate leader's alarms evaporated as the train pulled into the depot; Hunter had not arrived. With his customary zeal, Early dispatched the train to his trailing infantry, assumed control of Breckinridge's division, inspected and adjusted the city's outer defenses, and prepared to attack Hunter.

While reconnoitering a short distance to the southwest, Early observed a combined force of Union infantry and cavalry swarming over Brigadier General John Imboden's small brigade of mounted infantry. The Confederate commander immediately sent instructions to Ramseur in Lynchburg to bring his division forward. These regiments arrived as Imboden's thin line began to collapse. Ramseur promptly deployed and counter-attacked the blueclad foe. The Federal forces, though outnumbering

their assailants, immediately retreated.¹⁴ Viewing the affair, an ebullient Early shook his fist at the fleeing enemy, and in his normal "polite" manner yelled, "No buttermilk rangers after you now, damn you."¹⁵

From prisoners Early discovered his adversary's strength. Since he mustered only 7,000 infantrymen, fifteen artillery pieces, and 2,000 battered cavalrymen, "Old Jube" squelched his natural aggressiveness. He decided to assume temporarily a defensive posture behind strong breastworks until his other units arrived. Impatiently, Early stretched his regiments to guard the main avenues into Lynchburg and prepared his lines for an attack. He ordered a train engine with car to be run up and down the track throughout the night in order to delude the Federals into believing that Rebel reinforcements were arriving incessantly. Early compounded this deception by instructing his men to cheer whenever the train returned. This act signified their "rapture at being reinforced."¹⁶

Activities in the Union camp that night demonstrated the differences in the opposing commanders' personalities. Vacillation and doubt had conquered Hunter's will to fight. Besieged by various suggestions and alternatives, the bewildered Union commander finally ordered a reconnaissance in force to be conducted the next morning. This ineptly and feebly performed operation achieved few results except to convince Early to try to provoke the Yankees into committing a rash action. He ordered Ramseur and Gordon to attack to their immediate front the unit which had conducted the Federal reconnaissance, Brigadier General Jeremiah C. Sullivan's division (see diagram 2). This surprise offensive unnerved the Federals; panic ensued. However, the timely arrival of Brigadier General George Crook's division restored calm, prevented Sullivan's entire rout, and repelled the Confederate assault.

Nevertheless, the Rebel attack accomplished its objective. Hunter, believing his army had miraculously stopped a major Confederate offensive, lost all intentions to continue the battle. He ordered a withdrawal northward once darkness descended.¹⁷ Several of his subordinates expressed their dismay.¹⁸ A future United States president, who at that time commanded a regiment in Crook's division, commented that Early's aggressiveness disturbed Hunter to such a degree that no logical argument could convince him to persist against the obviously outnumbered Rebels. Rutherford B. Hayes dolefully wrote, "We just backed out on the Liberty road."¹⁹

Until his other elements arrived, Early remained content to rest behind his defense works. Late in the afternoon the remainder of the Second Corps, less artillery, reached Lynchburg. Augmented by these units, "Old Jube's" natural inclination was to conduct an immediate, although risky night attack. However, strangely, he hesitated, and then decided not to hazard the operation.²⁰ Perhaps the responsibility of independent command dampened Early's ardor and compelled him to reflect differently on the situation. His men needed rest and he had little supporting artillery. If the attack failed, his officers would encounter problems in rallying their soldiers in the darkness. Subsequently, a determined Union counterattack might seize Lynchburg, and thus doom Lee's army at Petersburg. Nevertheless, Early could not stay inactive. He ordered night patrols to ascertain the Federal positions, particularly the artillery. Their examinations revealed the Union army was retreating.²¹

Early wired Lee that he had repulsed the enemy, they were retreating, and he would pursue and destroy them if his "cavalry did its duty."²² A grateful public crowned "Old Jube" the "Saviour of Lynchburg."²³ One

of Early's soldiers wrote his mother, "We made old Hunter git [sic] up and dust."²⁴ Another summed the achievement by stating, "Early had a nice little fight in the Valley."²⁵

Hunter claimed he withdrew only because his powder and rations were depleted. He also asserted he had beaten the Rebels in every engagement. However, for a "victorious army," his units marched unusually swiftly for Federal forces. When Early's Army of the Valley commenced its pursuit at dawn on 19 June, Hunter's lead elements had already traveled twenty miles.²⁶

Despite this Union lead, Early's advance elements overtook and assailed Hunter's rear guard at Liberty and at Hanging Rock. They captured several hundred Union prisoners and ten artillery pieces. Nevertheless, through communications errors and continual cavalry mishaps, Early's main force could not catch Hunter's. On 22 June Hunter escaped by marching westward through the Kanawha Valley.²⁷ Although he saved his army with this maneuver, the Union commander did remove himself from the war for several weeks.²⁸

"Old Jube's" telegram to Lee stated that Hunter had retreated "in great haste and confusion."²⁹ Union officers confirmed this observation. Colonel Rodgers confided to his diary that the Federal army had departed Lynchburg in "hopeless confusion." This flight stemmed from their fear of "Rebel cavalry and Libby Prison."³⁰ Colonel Comby's diary revealed that Hunter's withdrawal demonstrated "everybody was crazy."³¹ In their pursuit of the Federal army, Early's men also encountered problems. Captain Hull told his mother that he had been "too busy marching" to write her earlier.³² One of the division commanders informed his spouse that the chase distancing sixty miles in three days was the "hardest

march of the war" he had experienced.³³

Both armies suffered from lack of provisions. Hunter's rapid departure from Lynchburg had stranded his soldiers with just six ounces of flour per man.³⁴ Colonel Rodgers bitterly complained that his men marched with little food and no water in the scorching heat.³⁵ The army's Artillery Chief wrote that famished soldiers slashed young trees in order to obtain the soft inner bark for food. Others scoured the ground traveled by cavalry and artillery units for corn kernels that dropped from feed bags.³⁶ Early left Lynchburg without his cumbersome wagon trains. Rodes' division especially suffered from this sacrifice since it had not been issued rations in three days.³⁷

Two other factors characterized this act in military drama. Along the route of the chase tiring Confederates harvested a bountiful yield of abandoned artillery pieces, wagons, and tons of other Union military equipment.³⁸ Of more impact, however, was the desolate scene that greeted the grayclads. During the pursuit they surveyed ransacked homes, burned fields, and wailing women and children.³⁹ A captain's statement reflected the consensus of his comrades. He felt only "contempt for the wretch who made war on women and children."⁴⁰

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

1. Colonel Robert S. Rodgers, Commander 2d Eastern Shore Maryland Regiment, wrote that he was "sick of Hunter's depredations on civilian personnel." He kept General Order #34, Department of West Virginia, dated 1 June 1864, which stated no receipts would be given for property taken from Valley inhabitants. General Order #39, dated 9 June 1864, stated that a civilian named David S. Creigh was hanged for the responsibility of a Union soldier's death. The executioners left him dangling with a sign around his neck that read "Murderer of a Union Soldier." They also burned the building in which the alleged crime was committed. Robert Slidell Smith Rodgers Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Federal soldiers also burned the Virginia Military Institute and Governor Letcher's home. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 97.

2. Louis Morton, "Vermonters at Cedar Creek," Vermont History 33 (1965): 327; Charles M. Blackford, Campaign and Battle of Lynchburg, Va. (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell Company, 1901), p. 5.

3. Early Papers, vol. 10; Freeman, Dispatches, no. 119, p. 216; no. 129, p. 226.

4. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 763; Early, Memoir, pp. 40-41.

5. Jubal A. Early, Autobiographical Sketch and Narrative of the War between the States (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1912), p. 371.

6. Richard Leach to his father, 16 June 1864, James Leach Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Leach was an Assistant Surgeon in Second Corps. Despite the secrecy some soldiers did have inclinations that they were headed to the Valley. Henry Berkeley, Four Years in the Confederate Artillery: The Diary of Private Henry Robinson Berkeley, ed. William H. Runge (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 12 June 1864, p. 82.

7. Freeman, Dispatches, no. 131, p. 239; no. 137, p. 240; no. 138, p. 241; no. 147, p. 268.

8. Early, Memoir, p. 41.

9. Brigadier General Bryan Grimes to his wife, several letters in June 1864, Bryan Grimes Letters, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. An interesting comment by

Major Wells J. Hawks, Early's Chief Commissary Officer, reveals the debilitation wrought by a decline in quantities and change in kinds of rations during the period preceding the march. Second Corps Commissary Records, Thomas J. Jackson Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

10. William B. Pettit to his wife, 19 June 1864, William B. Pettit Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

11. Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early to General Robert E. Lee, 16 June 1864, Charles S. Venable Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. Lieutenant Colonel Venable was Lee's Assistant Adjutant.

12. Early, Narrative, p. 373.

13. Blackford, pp. 34-38; Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 99.

14. Early, Memoir, pp. 42-43.

15. Edward M. Daniel, Speeches and Orations of John Warwick Daniel (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell Company, Inc., 1911), p. 541. Major John Daniel served on Early's staff. After the war, Virginia voters elected him to the U.S. Senate. "Buttermilk rangers" was a derisive term Early used to describe Confederate cavalry. He characterized them, unfairly to some degree, as always leaving a "hotter" than usual conflict to sip buttermilk at a faraway farmhouse while they charmed southern belles with tales of their heroics. Vandiver, p. 41.

16. Early, Narrative, p. 375; Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 39.

17. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, pp. 99, 121, 130-132, 141-143.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 100, 121, 130, 133, 135, 142-143.

19. T. Harry Williams, Hayes of the Twenty-Third (New York: Knopf, 1965), p. 197. From captured Rebels, Hunter discovered his opponent's identity. This knowledge totally distressed him. H. A. DuPont, The Campaign of 1864 in the Valley of Virginia (New York: National Americana Society, 1925), pp. 79-80. Colonel DuPont was Hunter's Chief of Artillery.

20. Early, Memoir, pp. 44-45.

21. Brigadier General Clement A. Evans to John W. Daniel, 17 September 1897, John W. Daniel Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Evans was a brigade commander in Gordon's division.

22. Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early to General Robert E. Lee, 19 June 1864, Venable Papers. The cavalry did not deserve this barb, but it reflected Early's mistrust of the mounted arm.

23. Bushong, p. 191.

24. Captain Asbury Hull to his mother, 5 July 1864, Edward Harden Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Hull served as a company commander in the Forty-fourth Georgia Regiment.

25. R. H. Wright to Coleman Hawes, 27 July 1864, Coleman H. Hawes Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

26. Freeman, Dispatches, no. 147, p. 266; Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 45.

27. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, pp. 101-102; Early, Memoir, pp. 45-47.

28. By retreating to West Virginia, Hunter put himself in a logistical predicament which would not permit him to conduct further operations for weeks. Early would not follow him since the Confederate army would be unsupported, would have no supplies, and would leave the Valley open to any invasion from the north.

29. Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early to General Robert E. Lee, 21 June 1864, Venable Papers.

30. Diary, 21 June 1864, Rodgers Papers. Libby Prison was perhaps the most notorious Confederate prison after Andersonville. It was located in Richmond. Mark M. Boatner III, The Civil War Dictionary (New York: David McKay Co., 1959), p. 482.

31. Williams, Hayes, p. 200.

32. Captain Asbury Hull to his mother, 5 July 1864, Harden Papers.

33. Major General Stephen D. Ramseur to his wife, 24 June 1864, Stephen D. Ramseur Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

34. George E. Pond, The Shenandoah Valley in 1864 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1883), p. 273.

35. Diary, 21 June 1864, Rodgers Papers.

36. DuPont, p. 91.

37. Captain W. W. Old's Diary, 21 June 1864, Early Papers, vol. 4.

38. I. G. Bradwell, "Early's Demonstration against Washington," Confederate Veteran 22, no. 10 (1914): 438. Bradwell was an enlisted man in the Thirty-first Georgia Regiment.

39. Henry K. Douglas, I Rode with Stonewall (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1940), p. 290. Major Douglas served on the Second Corps staff under Jackson, Ewell, and Early.

40. Manuscript, p. 99, Samuel D. Buck Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Captain Buck was the commander of Company H, Thirteenth Virginia Regiment.

CHAPTER III
A VISIT TO LINCOLN

On 22 June, the day Hunter entered the Kanawha Valley, Early ceased the pursuit and conceded his men a day's rest at Botetourt Spring near Salem. They had traveled 209 miles in just nine days.¹ In the warm waters of the resort spa, Early's begrimed veterans enjoyed their first respite since departing Petersburg.² While his soldiers frolicked, "Old Jube" plotted his next operation. Lee wired instructions which permitted Early latitude regarding his next movement. He had the liberty to return to Petersburg, or, if he deemed the opportunity available, to invade Maryland and attempt to create havoc there. Once he accomplished this task, he had the option to determine whether an expedition against Washington was possible.³

Early's adventurous temperament forecast his decision. A future nemesis stated Early was the only general in the Confederate army bold enough to attempt the endeavor.⁴ Captain Buck seconded that accolade and added, "also collect tribute for his expenses."⁵

Before proceeding northward down the Valley, Early reorganized the Army of the Valley. He formed two infantry corps, each containing two divisions. He appointed Brigadier General John Echols to command Breckinridge's division and organized that element and Gordon's under Breckinridge's corps. "Old Jube" assumed control of Ramseur's and Rodes' divisions. These infantry organizations totaled only 10,000 men. Early

combined the four separate cavalry brigades of Brigadier Generals John D. Imboden, Bradley T. Johnson, W. L. Jackson, and John McCausland into a cavalry division under the command of the newly assigned Robert Ransom, Major General, C.S.A. Brigadier General Armistead L. Long directed the forty-gun artillery brigade. Four thousand men comprised these cavalry and artillery components.⁶

Besides the obvious operational problems he would confront by invading Maryland, Early had to tackle other difficulties. Half his infantrymen possessed no shoes. The hard campaign during the next few weeks would abrade unprotected human soles like sandpaper on soft wood. The remnants of fourteen regiments from several divisions mauled in the battles of May constituted Gordon's division. Little pride existed in the unit. Finally, numerous mountaineers served in Breckinridge's old division. Vicious fighters when Union invaders threatened their homes, they demonstrated only lukewarm zeal for the Confederacy when they operated outside their own territory.⁷

Despite these handicaps, Early started his expedition to the Potomac River. The main body reached Staunton three days later.⁸ There the Confederate commander grappled with crippling logistical problems. Poor rail transportation prevented needed rations and forage from reaching the Valley Army. Subsequently, numerous men endured hardships from hunger, fatigue, and disease. Early instructed his Chief Commissary Officer to arrange civilian subsidies from granaries not destroyed by Hunter's earlier raid. This officer, Major Wells J. Hawks, also coordinated with Confederate sympathizers to construct supply points at convenient locations along the route of march.⁹ "Old Jube" then wired Lee that circumstances still favored an advance northward. On 28 June, with

two days' rations in their haversacks, Early's legions resumed the march up the Valley Turnpike toward the Potomac.¹⁰

Despite their awesome difficulties, Early's veterans maintained high spirits. One soldier wrote his mother that he longed to remain stationed in the Valley since it contained plenty of "good mountain water."¹¹ Another told his wife that he prayed Early would not continue northward since they had access to "fat beef, mutton, milk, and cream."¹² Nevertheless, in spite of these wishful dreams, the Confederates proceeded northward. They reached Winchester on 2 July without encountering any Union forces.

At Winchester Early received a telegram restricting temporarily his freedom of action. Lee instructed "Old Jube" to remain in the Lower Valley until he destroyed the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal. To comply with these instructions, Early ordered Ransom to dispatch several cavalry elements to demolish key features of the two objectives.

From other far-ranging cavalry units, Early learned that Major General Franz Sigel commanded a large-sized Union force at Martinsburg. "Old Jube" planned to overwhelm it with his infantry on 3 July while his remaining cavalry, Bradley Johnson's brigade, encircled the "Flying Dutchman's" position in order to intercept any remnants that escaped the Rebel attack. However, Sigel's pickets alerted him to the Confederate approach. The Federal general promptly demonstrated how he earned his sobriquet. Without one trace of effective resistance, Sigel's men retreated across the Potomac and entrenched in the Maryland Heights overlooking Harpers Ferry. Through mishaps, Johnson's brigade missed the opportunity to detain the Yankee infantry prior to the crossing. Again,

his troopers' inefficiency frustrated Early's plans to destroy or capture an entire Federal unit. One fact did soften "Old Jube's" chagrin. In his haste, Sigel abandoned several well-provisioned warehouses to the Rebels.¹³

The next day, Independence Day, Early continued his offensive action by attacking the Harpers Ferry garrison. Apparently, a gross blunder in the Union command permitted the Federals to be completely surprised; they immediately forsook their posts.¹⁴ As Early's men occupied the arsenal they discovered a huge Fourth of July banquet, complete with champagne, awaiting them.¹⁵ Up to that moment, the gods of fortune still smiled on the aggressive Army of the Valley.

Despite his successes, Early's army abruptly halted. Union artillery on the Maryland Heights dominated the roads emerging from Harpers Ferry and denied the Confederates access to the Washington Pike. Unable to dislodge the Federal batteries, Early decided to move northwest to the Shepherdstown Ford and there cross the Potomac. Many of Early's veterans were familiar with these shallows. In 1862 and 1863, Lee used the ford to conduct his invasions. As soon as his army received its needed footwear, Early planned to follow his commander's example.¹⁶

Prior to crossing the water barrier, Early issued warnings to his soldiers that they were not marauders and thus, must not wage war on a helpless population. He cautioned them to maintain strict discipline or face arrest and punishment. Further, he informed them that they would compensate Yankee merchants for any military-related goods they seized.¹⁷ On the seventh, the shoes arrived. The next day the grayclads traversed the Potomac into Maryland and after a sharp fight at Middleton, reached Frederick on the ninth.¹⁸

Early's aversion to wage war on civilians did not preclude his imposing contributions on the Maryland communities of Hagerstown and Frederick. "Old Jube" deemed these towns legitimate targets since they contained military supply depots. He levied \$200,000 on the latter, but received only \$20,000 from Hagerstown due to McCausland's error in reading his instructions.¹⁹ Again, Confederate cavalry seemed destined to thwart their commander in another facet of the operation.

Other Confederate troopers, in a more characteristic cavalry role, galloped throughout the countryside gathering intelligence, cutting telegraph wires, and destroying railroad bridges, rails, and cars. Early instructed Ransom to have several groups appear at different locations simultaneously in order to create an illusion of much greater strength than the Confederate force actually numbered.²⁰ Bradley Johnson's brigade received a special mission. Lee had ordered Early to send a cavalry detachment to the vicinity of the military prison at Point Lookout, just south of Baltimore. Southern naval officers had drafted a scheme to sail up the Chesapeake Bay, overpower the prison guard, and free the 18,000 Confederate inmates. Johnson's role entailed creating a diversion near Baltimore, and then aiding the liberation attempt, if possible. Additional details about the plan were scant and vague. Early, and more directly Johnson, would need to rely on enemy sources and Confederate sympathizers for information about Federal troop dispositions in the area. One other problem affected Johnson. His brigade would have to ride, unsupported through enemy territory, 200 miles in only four days.²¹

When Early's army neared Harpers Ferry, northern alarm over defeats in the Valley disintegrated into confused panic. After Confederate cavalry severed telegraphic communications, baffling mystery shrouded

Early's progress and northern fears became epidemic. A perplexed and uncoordinated Union command in Washington increasingly vacillated in their reactions to Early's movements.

Even Grant contributed to the bewilderment. As late as 3 July, the day before Early captured Harpers Ferry, the Union Commanding General informed Edward Stanton and Henry Halleck, the Secretary of War and Army Chief of Staff, respectively, that the Confederate "Second Corps was at Petersburg," and that the "perceived threat" to the Potomac defensive line could not be serious. However, by 5 July Grant realized the gravity of the situation and offered to dispatch a corps from his army at Petersburg to repel the invaders. President Lincoln, not desirous of weakening the Army of the Potomac at that moment, accepted one division and instructed the governors of New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts to supply him with hundred-day volunteers. He did inform Grant to be prepared to dispatch other divisions if Halleck needed them.²²

After the Confederates entered Frederick, press rumors were rife about Early's strength. Adding to the public "confidence," the New York Herald revealed its manner of discharging its public obligations by printing that the Confederate movements mystified the Union command. As a result gold prices skyrocketed.²³

One Union officer, very much interested in the developments, did not panic. Major General Lew Wallace commanded the Federal Middle Department with headquarters at Baltimore. Since his organization was basically administrative in nature, Wallace commanded few soldiers. Nevertheless, he assembled a ragged group of home guards, one-hundred-day militia, a little cavalry, and a portion of the Baltimore garrison, and departed on 7 July for Monocacy Junction. At this strategic location,

three miles east of Frederick, the Frederick-Baltimore and Frederick-Washington Turnpikes diverged. That day he received Major General James B. Ricketts' veteran division from the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac. Wallace's force then totaled 7,000 men. The Union general realized he could not stop his able opponent, but he hoped to delay the Confederates until sufficient reinforcements, capable of destroying Early, arrived. Additionally, Wallace believed he would be able to determine whether the capital or Baltimore was the Confederate target.²⁴

When the Confederate army reached Frederick on 9 July, Rebel cavalry discovered Wallace behind the Monocacy River and reported this information to Early. At 9:00 A.M., "Old Jube" deployed his infantry divisions into battle formation and initiated an artillery bombardment to pinpoint the Federal guns (see diagram 3). The Union artillery counterfire revealed that a frontal assault would be costly; skirmishers verified this observation. Subsequently, Early opted to turn one of his adversary's flanks.

He decided to assail Wallace's left since it guarded the route to Washington, "Old Jube's" objective. As he examined the terrain on that flank for evidence of a ford across the Monocacy River, the Confederate commander witnessed McCausland's cavalry brigade splash across the river, dismount, and attack in the direction of the entrenched Federals.²⁵ As the grayclad troopers advanced through a cornfield, Ricketts' veterans patiently observed them. As the cavalrymen closed to within 150 yards the bluecoats arose and poured a murderous fire into McCausland's hapless men. The cavalrymen who survived that initial volley fled in horror. Complaining that they had been deliberately sacrificed, McCausland's troopers refused to attack again that day.²⁶

Upon viewing McCausland's debacle, Early sent Breckinridge a message instructing him to advance to the ford discovered by the cavalry and attack the Federal left flank. Gordon, noted for his offensive-minded spirit, enthusiastically complied. Upon crossing the river, Gordon's infantrymen encountered several obstacles. The Monocacy's opposite bank was steep and extremely muddy. The soldiers, slipping and stumbling as they crested the slope, provided easy targets to Union sharpshooters. The survivors of this obstacle next had to negotiate fields compartmentalized by strong, lateral fences. To complicate the attack further, stacks of newly harvested wheat dotted the landscape. Under certain circumstances these piles offered excellent protection to attacking units. However, in a situation where coordinated speed was needed these stacks disrupted an assault since they misaligned units and prevented volley fire. Finally, Ricketts' defenders were not poorly trained one-hundred-day militia who flinched at the sound of artillery. They revealed their veteran status as they coolly shifted their lines to face the Rebel attack head-on.²⁷

At the first fence, Brigadier General Clement Evans' brigade bore the brunt of the initial Union volley. Evans collapsed, seriously wounded. The regimental commanders of the Sixty-first Georgia and the Ninth Louisiana were killed outright while the remaining regimental commanders fell from their mounts, wounded. The brigade's attack halted momentarily, then surged forward as company grade officers and private soldiers pressed on with intensified fury. Upon slamming into the strongest Federal defense work, Evans' men hurled the Union infantrymen out of their entrenchments. Ricketts' men retreated to their second defensive line where two Confederate brigades under Brigadier General Zeb York

assaulted them. Although badly bloodied, York's screeching Rebels drove the Union force into their third and final line of breastworks. There reserves from other sections of Wallace's line reinforced Ricketts' remnants to outnumber Gordon's battered regiments. Nevertheless, Gordon ordered his reserve brigade under Brigadier General William Terry to attack. Through a cornfield Terry's Rebels charged into pointblank volley fire. However, as one survivor recalled: nothing could have stopped this torrent of rage "but a shot through each man."²⁸

During this assault Gordon's other brigades reorganized and trailed Terry's men. They smashed into the beleaguered Union breastworks and the flank suddenly collapsed.²⁹ Disaster threatened Wallace's entire army. Quick to take advantage of the situation, Early compelled Ramseur's and Rodes' divisions to renew their pressure on Wallace's center and right flank. Despite having no easily accessible path across the Monocacy, these heretofore frustrated divisions shattered the reduced Union positions to their front. Wallace's army disintegrated, lost many prisoners, and fled to the rear in a fashion similar to Wallace's later celebrated chariot race. By 4:00 P.M. organized combat ceased.³⁰

Although of short duration, the Battle of Monocacy was bloody. "Old Jube" lost 700 men while Wallace suffered 2,000 casualties. A stream that meandered through the scene of Gordon's and Ricketts' clash flowed red with blood for several hundred yards. Gordon's succinct account of the affair summed the battle. He described it as "short, decisive, bloody."³¹

Wallace's defeat eliminated the last significant Union force west of Washington. The epidemic of panic soared to pandemic levels throughout Maryland and its bordering states. In Federal reports Early's size

multiplied geometrically. Samuel Wilkerson of the New York World reported 40,000 rebels invaded Maryland while another 60,000 under A. P. Hill maneuvered to the capital's immediate south.³² Even Wallace exaggerated Early's strength; he reported 20,000 Confederates pursued him. However, this message did not reach the Federal authorities until midnight. The telegraph operator at Monocacy had fled in terror long before Wallace's departure.³³

Early's progress after Monocacy revealed to the Union command that Washington was the Confederate objective. A panic-stricken citizenry, aware that only ill-matched troops defended them from the Rebels, threw the capital into chaos. Alarm bells rang throughout the ninth and tenth. Frightened refugees and city inhabitants choked the roads in their haste to go where the Rebels were not. Prices skyrocketed and hoarding increased. Rumors spread that government books, records, and money were being packed in preparation for removal to New York. Bank employees packed all forms of currency to ship out of the city.³⁴ A crewman on a steamer transporting an artillery unit to Washington reported that "people . . . half frightened to death" completely disrupted normal daily affairs.³⁵ President Lincoln attempted to quell the disquiet. In a public address he stated, "Let us be vigilant, but keep cool. I hope neither Baltimore nor Washington will be taken."³⁶ However, the president needed more than hope and words to restrain Early. Lincoln immediately needed a major portion of Grant's veterans to rescue the capital.

"Old Jube" pondered the aftereffects of the struggle at Monocacy. He recognized that Wallace's determination had delayed the Confederate timetable by one day. Wounded Yankees and interrogated prisoners indicated that the stiff resistance had been no fluke. Early's old nemesis,

a division in the Sixth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, had augmented the raw militia and confronted him. With some satisfaction, though perhaps some disappointment, "Old Jube" realized that Lee's strategic diversion was succeeding to some degree.³⁷ Nevertheless, Early's major problem remained. He still required knowledge about the size of Union forces in the vicinity of Washington. If Grant had sent additional units to the capital, disaster could await the Valley Army. In spite of this dilemma, Early had to ascertain whether he could continue the operation. His audacity settled the predicament--he would persist.

Wallace had indeed detained the Confederates for one vital day. Also, despite overestimating Early's size, Wallace discovered that the Confederate army did not have the strength credited by northern newspapers. Federal authorities needed more assistance of this type. Without Grant's reinforcements, only 17,900 defenders manned the city's breastworks. Many of these men were the Veteran Reserve Corps, males too old to serve in the field armies; inexperienced trainees; one-hundred-day militia, virtually useless in a general engagement; and civilians who lacked even the mandatory rudiments to fire rifles, much less cannon.³⁸

On the same day Early vanquished Wallace, Grant wired Halleck that the remaining divisions of Major General Horatio G. Wright's Sixth Corps were proceeding to Washington. Grant stated that he would also redirect the Nineteenth Corps, scheduled to arrive at Fortress Monroe from garrison duty in New Orleans, to the capital. These reinforcements amounted to 16,000 men available for Washington's defense network.³⁹

A board of engineers, chaired by Major General J. G. Barnard, designed the formidable thirty-seven-mile protective system which

encircled the capital. Every prominent terrain feature, at intervals of 800 to 1,000 yards, boasted an enclosed field fort. Rifle trenches, strengthened by stout parapets and abatis, connected these more than fifty fortified structures. Field artillery battalions kept vigilance over every important approach, likely enemy field artillery positions, and ground depressions hidden from observation by the forts' defenders. Axemen had cleared all forested areas surrounding the fortified line out to distances of two miles. The system had a *pièce de résistance*. Seven hundred siege guns afforded overwhelming firepower against any attacker.⁴⁰

This impressive arrangement had one glaring weakness; it required a large number of troops. The planners considered 74,000 men in all branches of service as an adequate figure to defend the capital.⁴¹ However, to repulse an attack from only one direction required markedly fewer soldiers. In July 1864, Grant probably depended on this factor. If Grant's experienced combatants arrived in time, the Federal forces would vastly outnumber Early's small army.

"Old Jube" rested his victorious but fatigued army the evening of the ninth. At daybreak on 10 July, the regiments formed in columns tramped toward Rockville. Although Early enjoined his men to quicken their rate of march, the renowned "foot cavalry" could not respond. Nature had intervened. No rain had fallen in the area for six weeks. Suffocating dust clouds, left hanging on the windless day, fogged the road and choked the Rebel marchers. This condition, coupled with the scorching heat, crippled the army's pace. Hundreds collapsed from heat prostration or sheer exhaustion. Straggling increased as the blazing sun moved westward in the sky.⁴²

Early halted his column late that evening. Many of the men were

too spent to bother with their rations. Hundreds did not reach the camp until well after midnight. Nevertheless, despite their worn condition, "Old Jube" roused his soldiers early on the eleventh. At 3:30 A.M. Rodes' division, leading the army's advance, guided the Confederate column toward its objective. Washington lay twenty miles away.⁴³

Near Silver Springs Early's cavalry screen brushed aside an element of its Federal counterpart. After scouting the line of march to the capital's outer defense, the troopers reported to Early that no Union forces barred his progress to Washington. "Old Jube" hoped this good fortune would continue since the possibility apparently existed to storm Washington's defense works and sack the city by nightfall. However, his dreams faded as ill-fortune began to plague him. The withering heat which had baked his men during the previous day prevented restful slumber that evening. Fatigue sapped their desires to speed. Straggling, that odious companion to arduous marches, began immediately after sunrise. Still, Early urged his officers to beg, cajole, threaten, and order their men to continue a swift pace.⁴⁴ Speed and time dictated the outcome of this operation. Both opposed the Confederates.

Nearing Washington, Early grew apprehensive. Nobody from the capital rode out to greet him as a conqueror. He realized this fact meant Union troops would oppose his entrance. Early also suspected that this Federal resolution signified strong reinforcements had arrived for the city's defense.⁴⁵

Approximately 1:00 P.M. the Confederate vanguard received heavy but erratic fire from the Union siege guns at Fort Stevens (see diagram 4). This poor display of marksmanship intimated to its recipients that only ill-trained, badly frightened, and much-despised militia confronted them.

Advised of this situation, Early endeavored to press his men into closing their column. Gordon's division was so extended that it "was stretched out almost like skirmishers."⁴⁶ However, all the Confederate commander's exertions reaped few benefits; the heat, dust, and fatigue had wrought havoc on Early's veterans. They were simply too jaded to respond to any suggestion which accelerated the pace. Ordering his division commanders to organize their units as quickly as possible, Early rode forward to reconnoiter the Union breastworks. His inspection revealed strong entrenchments manned only by a few soldiers.⁴⁷ Jubilantly, Early perceived that an assault could overrun these few defenders and open the road to the city.

However, organizing his army into assault formations proved impossible. Early theoretically had 8,000 infantrymen available for the onslaught, but less than one-third of them was suitable for this immediate task. Cursing this mischance in his incomparable fashion, Early temporarily abandoned his plan and resurveyed the fortifications. This time he observed a pall of dust hovering over the capital. By mid-afternoon the cloud's source revealed itself. The uniforms and flags of the advancing column indicated more of the Army of the Potomac had reached the city.

"Old Jube" recognized he had major problems. Cavalry reports disclosed that the fortifications had no assailable flank. Continual skirmishes confirmed that experienced units augmented the raw militia. His soldiers' physical conditions prevented an effective attack.⁴⁸ He knew time was against him. As a result Early called for a council of war with his division commanders.⁴⁹

Early established his headquarters in the home of Francis P. Blair,

the brother of Lincoln's Postmaster General. While enjoying the fruits of Blair's wine cellar,⁵⁰ the Confederate generals weighed their alternatives. Obviously, they would soon have to retire southward since Hunter, reinforced by an extra dosage of fortitude, was closing in on the Valley Army's rear. However, they first had to settle the pressing matter of Washington's fate. They debated the issue. Surprisingly, the ever offensive-minded Gordon opted not to attack until the following day. His "men were not keen about it [an attack] today." After deliberation, Early canceled a night assault and ordered a dawn attack on the twelfth "unless some information should be received before that time showing its impracticability [sic]."⁵¹

The Confederate commander received such information in the form of a dispatch from Brigadier General Johnson late that evening. The cavalry leader had acquired intelligence data from reliable sources that two Union corps had reached Washington. Early realized the impact of this statement. One corps could offer serious resistance to his offensive, but two corps could annihilate him. Reluctantly, "Old Jube" suspended the dawn attack until he could investigate the situation at first light.⁵²

Basically Johnson had provided his commander accurate information. Sometime in the early afternoon on 11 July, troop transports docked at the Sixth Street wharves and disgorged hordes of veteran bluecoats. More units were scheduled to disembark during the evening and next morning. This arrival of one division of the Sixth Corps and a small contingent of the Nineteenth Corps changed the nature of the drama unfolding at the city's outer defense lines. Under Major General Wright's guidance, the lead elements proceeded to Fort Stevens. These units were the forces

which Early noted during his second reconnaissance of the fortifications. A distinguished visitor accompanied Wright. President Lincoln desired to witness the ensuing confrontation.⁵³ However, he wisely departed after Confederate sharpshooters sniped at his stovepipe hat. Perhaps a Federal officer's admonition prompted Lincoln's decision. The officer roughly warned him, "to get down, you fool!"⁵⁴

As light dawned on the eastern horizon on 12 July, Early and his division commanders spurred their horses to the picket line. Looking through their field glasses, the generals viewed a distressing scene. Thousands of Union soldiers manned the parapets. Rodes, upon examining the professional comportment of the reinforcements, remarked, "they are no hundred days' men, General."⁵⁵ Early discerned that even if his men penetrated the breastworks, a slim possibility in itself, the ferocious house-to-house combat which followed would destroy his army or guarantee its capture. Subduing his natural aggressiveness, Early admitted that all the odds weighted against him assured his failure. Subsequently, he decided not to attack, but to return to the Shenandoah Valley. Knowing that a daylight withdrawal would probably induce a Union attack, the Confederate commander planned a night movement.⁵⁶

Early dispatched a courier to recall Johnson. Upon receiving this messenger, the cavalry leader expressed his gratification. Maryland sympathizers had informed him that Federal authorities knew of the Point Lookout scheme and were prepared to crush it.⁵⁷

That afternoon Wright ordered an assault on Early's position. He aimed to clear the Confederate skirmish line and drive away worrisome sharpshooters in nearby houses. At 5:30 P.M. Colonel Dan Bidwell's infantry brigade advanced and readily accomplished its mission. However,

as Bidwell rashly continued the assault through a grove of trees, he blundered into a well-prepared ambush. A murderous volley decimated his lead elements, but the experienced survivors maintained their ground. Wright dispatched reinforcements, but darkness prevented further engagements.⁵⁸ With the cessation of this hostility, Early's raid on Washington ended.

While retiring, "Old Jube" remarked to a staff officer, "Major, we haven't taken Washington, but we've scared Abe Lincoln like hell!" Major Douglas acidly answered, "Yes, General, but this afternoon when that Yankee line moved out against us, I think some other people were scared blue as hell's brimstone!"⁵⁹

Early's decision did not automatically mean the Valley Army was free. "Old Jube" knew he needed to retreat rapidly since any delay was likely to envelop him in a fatal vise between two Federal armies. Fortunately for the graybacks, Union pursuit generally proved inadequate. Federal cavalry did cause some minor irritations on 13 July, but Johnson's returning regiments dispersed the Yankee troopers.⁶⁰ On the fourteenth the Valley Army waded the Potomac at White's Ford and by evening encamped at Leesburg. Early granted his legions a one-day reprieve, then pushed them hard until they gained the relative security of the Valley on the sixteenth. After 510 miles of strenuous marching and ardent fighting, the expedition that began on 13 June ended.⁶¹ The Army of the Valley had come home (see diagram 5).

Once safe, Early remarked that if the pursuit had been resolute and daring, his army would not have escaped. He claimed he based his evasive maneuvers on the Federals' lack of enterprise and their inability to understand Confederate audacity.⁶² This tendency to belittle his

opponents' capabilities would harm him in the future. However, at that moment, "Old Jube" could not foresee those later events. His interests concerned solely the present. The audacity of the expedition had propelled Early to the pinnacle of his career and popularity.⁶³

One set of incidents blemished Early's otherwise successful disengagement. On the surface these actions do not appear significant; however, they too portended ill-fortune for Early's later operations. Some of his soldiers ignored the instructions not to damage private, nonmilitary-related property. A few of Johnson's troopers burned Governor Augustus W. Bradford's home near Baltimore. However, Bradford had invited this attack since he allowed Union soldiers to use it as an observation outpost.⁶⁴ Of more import was the fact that someone set afire Postmaster General Montgomery Blair's mansion called "Falkland." Although Lieutenant Joshua Lee of the Fifty-third North Carolina Regiment testified that exploding Federal shells ignited the flames, few in the North absolved Early of the "conflagration."⁶⁵ After the war "Old Jube" wrote that although he had ordered the destruction of bridges, trains, and the Stevens Iron Works, he had not authorized "Falkland's" destruction.⁶⁶ In answer to Edmund Lee's postwar query, Early revealed that possibly some of his stragglers burned the home in revenge for Hunter's actions in the Valley.⁶⁷ However, he still insisted that he did not order "Falkland's" incineration. Early asserted that "Blair was the only good man on the cabinet," thus he would not have alienated him. True to his disposition, however, "Old Jube" did add that he "regretted time ran out on him before he could retaliate against more war-time property."⁶⁸

Early's account to Lee probably contains the key to explicating the question. Flagging Confederate discipline and uncontrolled vindictive-

ness had made the invaders insensitive to individual property. After the war Major General D. H. Hill described the "erratic efforts of free-lance Confederate soldiers." According to him, their disregard for discipline and their independent character produced an excessive egotism that yielded straggling, disregard of orders, and a lackluster performance in actions deemed futile.⁶⁹ If Hill's observations are valid, such attitudes, in conjunction with revenge, are possibly the motives behind the burnings.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. Pond, pp. 273-274.
2. Douglas, p. 291. Major Douglas also related the chief rumor of the day. "Old Jube," an ironclad bachelor, had encountered at a nearby female seminary a sweetheart from his past. Both thought his troops would be more efficient if they had a complete day's rest.
3. Early, Memoir, pp. 47-48.
4. Philip H. Sheridan, Personal Memoirs of P. H. Sheridan, 2 vols. (New York: Charles L. Webster Co., 1888), 1:457.
5. Manuscript, p. 102, Buck Papers.
6. Early, Narrative, p. 381; Douglas S. Freeman, Lee's Lieutenants, 3 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), 3:558.
7. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, p. 600; Early, Memoir, p. 49.
8. Early, Narrative, pp. 381-382; Pond, pp. 273-274.
9. Armistead L. Long, "General Early's Valley Campaign," Southern Historical Society Papers 3 (1877): 113.
10. Lieutenant General Jubal A. Early to General Robert E. Lee, 26 June 1864, Venable Papers; Early, Memoir, p. 50.
11. Captain Asbury Hull to his mother, 5 July 1864, Harden Papers.
12. Robert Coleman to his wife, 6 July 1864, Mary Eliza Schooler Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Coleman was the Valley Army's Surgeon General.
13. Early, Narrative, pp. 382-384; Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, pp. 175-176, 185.
14. Early, Narrative, p. 384.
15. C. R. Hatton, "The Valley Campaign of 1864," Confederate Veteran 27, no. 5 (1919): 168. Captain Hatton was the Adjutant of Brigadier General A. C. Godwin's brigade in Ramseur's division. Private John McCorkle, Kirkpatrick's Battery, Nelson's Artillery Battalion, attempted

to bring a water bucket of molasses, mounted on his mule, back to his camp. A nine-inch artillery shell exploded three yards behind the animal; the mule immediately bolted. McCorkle, knowing that "'lasses was 'lasses in Dixie in those days," held on to the bucket. He arrived in camp covered with molasses, his bucket filled with only two quarts of the precious syrup. Berkeley, 4 July 1864, p. 85.

16. Early, Narrative, pp. 384-385.

17. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, p. 592; Richard R. Duncan, "Maryland's Reaction to Early's Raid in 1864: A Summer of Bitterness," Maryland Historical Magazine 64 (1969): 249; Robert Coleman to his wife, 6 July 1864, Schooler Papers.

18. Early, Narrative, p. 386; J. Kelly Bennette Diary, 8 July 1864, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. Bennette served in the Eighth Virginia Cavalry. At Middleton Johnson's cavalry brigade blundered into an artillery ambush. Bennette vividly described the "most frightful wounds" he had ever seen.

19. Early, Memoir, p. 52; Early Papers, vol. 4. Local banks paid the Frederick ransom and the municipality assumed the debt. Subsequent attempts to have the Federal Government pay the debt failed. In 1951 the last payment was made. "Vote \$200,000 War Claim," New York Times, 5 April 1914, p. 1; C. P. Trussell, "Frederick, Md., Loses New Bid to Recover Civil War Ransom," New York Times, 14 May 1961, p. 41.

20. Bennette Diary, several dates, early July 1864.

21. Freeman, Dispatches, no. 149, p. 269; no. 152, p. 275; Early, Narrative, p. 386; Bradley Johnson, "My Ride around Baltimore in 1864," Southern Historical Society Papers 30 (1902): 217-218. This daring attempt, if successful, would form a whole corps for Lee's army and also give Early's forces enough strength to inflict serious, perhaps fatal, damage to the Union. Early chose Johnson because the latter was a native Marylander and knew the area and inhabitants.

22. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, pp. 15, 58-60, 63; pt. 1, p. 689.

23. Henry O. Swindler, "Last Stroke of a Master," American Mercury 18 (1929): 323; Freeman, Dispatches, no. 156, p. 279.

24. Wallace, 2:725; Duncan, p. 255; Jubal A. Early, "Early's March to Washington in 1864," in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 4 vols., ed. Robert U. Johnson and Clarence C. Buel (New York: The Century Co., 1884), 4:499. Wallace, of course, is better known as the author of Ben Hur.

25. Early, Narrative, p. 387. McCausland was returning from a raid. Not knowing the tactical situation but wishing to redeem himself for past blunders, he decided on his own initiative to determine exactly where the enemy infantry positions were, and overwhelm them, if possible.

26. Glenn H. Worthington, "The Battle of Monocacy," Confederate Veteran 36, no. 1 (1928): 22. Worthington was a local lad who witnessed the engagement. Note that this act by McCausland's men constituted mutiny.

27. John B. Gordon, Reminiscences of the Civil War (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1903), pp. 310-313.

28. John B. Gordon, "Battle of Monocacy," Southern Historical Society Papers 7 (1879): 174-175; I. G. Bradwell, "In the Battle of Monocacy, Md.," Confederate Veteran 36, no. 2 (1928): 57; Vandiver, p. 117.

29. One source, perhaps biased, stated that at this moment Confederate artillery fire from across the river raked the Federal line from the flank and the rear. This statement, however, may have some validity depending on the angle of the Union breastworks to the heights on the river's opposite bank. Jennings C. Wise, The Long Arm of Lee or The History of the Artillery of the Army of Northern Virginia, 2 vols. (Lynchburg, Va.: J. P. Bell, Co., 1915), 2:877.

30. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, pp. 351-352.

31. Ibid., pp. 201-202, 348, 352. Early's losses may be light if Gordon's accounts regarding his casualties are valid. Gordon, "Monocacy," p. 175.

32. J. Cutler Andrews, The North Reports the Civil War (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1955), p. 595.

33. Irving McKee, "Ben Hur" Wallace (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1947), p. 73.

34. Benjamin F. Cooling III, "Civil War Deterrent: Defenses of Washington," in Military Analysis of the Civil War, ed. Editors of Military Affairs (Millwood, N.Y.: KTO Press, 1977), p. 54; Vandiver, pp. 141, 158; Bushong, p. 207.

35. Anonymous, Newtown, Conn., Journals and Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

36. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, pp. 140, 173.

37. Swindler, pp. 325-326; Early, Battle and Leaders, 4:498.

38. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, pp. 136, 195, 224-225.

39. Ibid., pp. 155-156, 236.

40. John W. Daniel, "General Jubal A. Early," Southern Historical Society Papers 22 (1894): 299; J. G. Barnard, A Report on the Defenses of Washington, cited by Jubal A. Early, "General Barnard's Report on

the Defenses of Washington in July 1864," Southern Magazine (Baltimore) 10 (1872): 717. Barnard published his report in 1872. Early cited pp. 33-34 of this original report. Margaret Leech, Reveille in Washington (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), p. 332. An abatis was an obstacle formed by sharpened trees felled toward the enemy. Boatner, p. 1.

41. Swindler, p. 324.

42. Jubal A. Early, "The Advance upon Washington in July 1864," Southern Magazine 8 (1871): 756; Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 348; Major General Stephen Ramseur to his wife, 15 July 1864, Ramseur Papers.

43. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, p. 594.

44. Early, Memoir, p. 56. An interesting sidelight was published years later by a participant in the conflict. He reported that many of the Rebels stopped at Silver Springs to confiscate the naval whiskey stores there. Intoxication and much lost time resulted. Edward Babcock, "How Whiskey Saved Washington from Early," New York Tribune, 1 March 1901, p. 9.

45. Early, "The Advance upon Washington," p. 763.

46. Vandiver, p. 151.

47. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 348. Gordon actually rode into an unoccupied sector of the trenches. He was not able to deploy his men to take advantage of this Federal deficiency. Gordon, Reminiscences, p. 314. One source reported that only 209 men of the 150th Ohio Regiment originally occupied the fort. Once Union officials determined Early was advancing on the Seventh Street Road, they dispatched three National Guard regiments to the area. Leech, pp. 336-337.

48. Jedediah Hotchkiss, Make Me a Map of the Valley: The Civil War Journal of Stonewall Jackson's Topographer, ed. Archie P. McDonald, with a Foreword by T. Harry Williams (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1973), 11 July 1864, p. 215. Captain Hotchkiss was also Early's topographical engineer.

49. Early, Narrative, pp. 390-392.

Douglas, pp. 294-295; Hotchkiss, 11 July 1864, p. 215.

51. Gordon, Reminiscences, pp. 314-315; Early, Memoir, p. 59; Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 348.

52. Early, Narrative, p. 392; Johnson, pp. 218-219. Johnson's brigade had been mounted for sixty-seven hours. However, he was still continuing toward Point Lookout.

53. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, pp. 209, 273.

54. Vandiver, p. 168. Traditionally, the young officer was Lieutenant Colonel Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Wright's aide-de-camp.

55. Daniel, "Early," p. 298.

56. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 270. Postwar records revealed the Federal defenses in that sector totaled 20,400 men. Once "Old Jube's" stragglers arrived, the Confederate army mustered no more than 9,000 to 10,000 infantrymen and cavalrymen. Daniel, "Early," p. 299; Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, p. 258.

57. Johnson, p. 222. Unknown to the Rebel raiders, the Confederate authorities had canceled the attempted breakout after determining Union agents had unveiled the operation.

58. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 277.

59. Douglas, pp. 295-296.

60. Early, Narrative, p. 394; Johnson, p. 222.

61. Daniel, "Early," p. 290. A cavalryman in the Eighth Virginia Cavalry kept a running total of his regiment's mileage. These troopers rode 1,004 miles during the campaign. Bennette Diary, 15 July 1864. An artilleryman stated his battery marched two nights and days before they halted. He thought the march was worse than the one to Lynchburg. Berkeley, 14 July 1864, p. 88.

62. Jubal A. Early, "Advance on Washington in 1864," Southern Historical Society Papers 9 (1881): 309.

63. Douglas, pp. 293-294.

64. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, pp. 179, 194.

65. Confederate Veteran 18, no. 8 (1910): 376; Early, Narrative, p. 395.

66. Jubal A. Early, "The Only Burnings Authorized during the War," New York Times, 5 May 1871, p. 2.

67. Major Douglas wrote that many of the men, after surveying the destruction committed by Hunter, felt that "it was very hard to admit that vengeance belonged solely to the Lord." Douglas, p. 290.

68. Jubal A. Early to Edmund Jennings Lee II, 26 September 1872, Edmund Jennings Lee II Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Lee had questioned Early of this action because Federal raiders later burned Lee's home in retaliation.

69. D. H. Hill, The Confederate Soldier in the Ranks (Richmond: William Ellis Jones, Bookend Job Printer, 1885), p. 5.

CHAPTER IV
THE IRISH SAVIOR

After Early's escape from Washington, Union armies under Major Generals Hunter, Sigel, and William Averell consolidated under Major General George Crook and prepared to attack their Rebel tormentors. "Old Jube" did not allow them this initiative. In a surprise maneuver on 24 July Early's army smashed into Crook's exposed left flank at Kernstown and routed the Union force. However, his "old nemesis," Confederate cavalry, failed to pursue the fleeing Federal effectively, and total victory slipped from "Old Jube's" grasp. Lee wired Davis that in their precipitous retreat the Union armies abandoned seventy-two wagons and twelve artillery caissons.¹ Subsequently, Crook evacuated the Valley and Early conceivably had the opportunity to threaten Washington again.

Grant had a major dilemma. The summer of 1864, so prevalent in Union expectations for a final, decisive victory, was increasingly deteriorating. The growing war-weariness and general hopelessness that the struggle would not terminate honorably expanded throughout the northern populace. McClellan's candidacy had received incalculable benefits, particularly psychological ones, as a result of Early's successes.² Grant's concern for the situation in the Valley persuaded him that it needed an immediate remedy. Although he had to postpone his offensive against Lee at Petersburg, Grant ordered two infantry corps

and six cavalry regiments to the Shenandoah Valley. Additionally, he directed all units arriving from the Gulf of Mexico Department be sent to the troubled arena instead of to his Army of the Potomac.³ Grant recognized the offensive-minded Lee would seek information about these movements to exploit any weaknesses created by them;⁴ however, the Federal commander realized the seriousness of the Union predicament. In a letter to President Lincoln on 25 July, Grant proposed that one commander be selected to consolidate the four military departments which in some measure had jurisdiction over Union forces in the Valley.⁵ Despite this recommendation, administrative inactivity failed to exploit this proposal thoroughly while military activity in the Valley still failed to counter Early's unpredictable tactics.

In spite of Lee's warning that more Union forces were en route to the Valley, "Old Jube" had not remained quiet. In retaliation for Hunter's earlier depredations against private property in the Valley, on 28 July Early ordered McCausland to take two cavalry brigades on a raid into Pennsylvania in order to demand a ransom of \$500,000 from the citizens of Chambersburg. If municipal officials did not deliver the sum, Early told his cavalry leader to torch the town. McCausland's troopers entered Chambersburg on 30 July. After a six-hour ultimatum period expired, and the officials had not delivered the ransom, McCausland ordered the incineration. The conflagration consumed 527 buildings valued at \$313,294.34.⁶ While returning to Early, the raiders were surprised by Federal cavalry at Moorefield and disastrously defeated.⁷ This encounter, though unforeboding at the time, would damage Early's fortunes in future engagements.

Early's second expedition north of the Potomac provoked additional

consternation at Grant's headquarters. In a polite but firm fashion on 1 August 1864, Grant telegraphed his civilian superiors he would take positive measures to correct the intolerable Valley situation. He appointed Major General Philip H. Sheridan as commander of all Union forces in the Valley and instructed the fiery Irishman "to put himself south of the enemy and follow him to the death."⁸ On 6 August Grant gave Sheridan the secondary mission of destroying the Shenandoah Valley's capacity as a supply depot.⁹ The Valley was now slated to receive an unwelcome visit from Grant's total war concept.

Another of Early's cavalry brigade commanders, Brigadier General Imboden, informed "Old Jube" that a large Federal army consisting of three infantry corps, a cavalry division, and supporting artillery had assembled at Harpers Ferry under Sheridan's command on 9 August.¹⁰ To confuse Sheridan and possibly force him into making a fatal mistake, Early initiated a program of ceaseless marching and countermarching. He intended this maneuver to deceive Sheridan on the actual size of the Confederate army.¹¹ This incessant marching had to be wearisome if the diary of one of Early's veterans of numerous campaigns is reliable. He stated that the constant movement was "the worst ever saw [sic]," although he did welcome the steady supply of green apples found along the routes.¹²

Despite Early's efforts, Sheridan would not react hastily. He utilized the remainder of August to familiarize his command with the Valley terrain and to attain adequate supplies and transport wagons. Furthermore, Early's maneuvers and reinforcements did confuse the Union commander. Sheridan felt he needed additional preparatory time prior to clashing with the Rebel army.¹³ Grant, believing the additional units

had swelled Early's army to 40,000 soldiers, agreed with Sheridan's caution and instructed him to assume a defensive posture while he pressured Lee into recalling "Old Jube's" reinforcements. Sheridan withdrew to better defensive terrain and Grant's plan succeeded. Lee had to recall the Valley reinforcements to counter the Union attack at Petersburg.¹⁴ Early, believing Sheridan timid and incapable, followed the retreating Union army.¹⁵

Sheridan utilized his cavalry division under Major General Alfred T. Torbert to serve as rearguard for his retreating army and to destroy all forage and crops in its path.¹⁶ With this assignment Torbert commenced a deadly contest of daily skirmishing with Early's pursuing force. This unvariable duel frayed nerves at all levels of command. An enlisted soldier concealed in his diary his dread of the climbing casualty rate produced daily by the short but vicious conflicts.¹⁷ Major General Ramseur confided to his wife of the continual harassment of his infantry columns and supply trains by Yankee cavalry uninhibited by their Rebel counterpart.¹⁸ Perhaps the most debilitating effect on the Confederate army produced by these constant struggles was the increased confidence Sheridan's cavalry gained in contending with Early's legions in the open fields of the Valley.¹⁹

Unable to develop a situation justifying a full-scale attack, Early resumed his marching strategem to entice Sheridan out of his entrenchments and fight on grounds of Early's choice. "Old Jube's" commanders increasingly grew overconfident as Sheridan, still acting under Grant's restraint, bided his time.²⁰ That moment arrived within two weeks. On 16 September 1864 Grant visited Sheridan's headquarters. He came with one principal purpose, summarized vividly by a sergeant in a Vermont

brigade, in mind: "I hate to see that old cuss around. When that old cuss is around there's sure to be a big fight on hand."²¹ On 18 September Sheridan received from Averell a reconnaissance message which stated Early had divided his army and exposed it to a possible defeat in detail. By chance, Early learned of Grant's visit, sensed its significance, and realized the blunder he had committed by dividing his forces. By anxious forced marching, "Old Jube's" scattered divisions reassembled.²² Early's moment of reckoning had arrived.

On 19 September Sheridan's Army of Shenandoah attacked Early with an overwhelming order of battle. His three infantry corps, the Sixth, Eighth, and Nineteenth, added 31,600 infantrymen to his 6,400 cavalrymen and 2,000 artillerymen available for field duty. To oppose this large host, Early's Army of the Valley mustered 12,150 men. The four infantry divisions, Breckinridge, Rodes, Gordon, and Ramseur, assembled 8,500 veterans. Major Generals Lunsford L. Lomax's and Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry divisions fielded 2,900 troopers while Colonel Thomas H. Carter's artillery brigade assembled 750 gunners.²³

Sheridan's scheme of maneuver, simple in concept, proved difficult to execute because of its dependence on the flawless timing of a combined infantry/cavalry assault (see diagram 6). This weakness became readily apparent as the congestion caused by the narrow confines of Berryville Canyon, not compensated for by Sheridan's timetable, upset the attack's timing and delayed the coordinated blow designed to annihilate Early.²⁴ Upon learning from his pickets at the Opequon Creek crossings that thousands of Union soldiers had driven them back on the Berryville Road, Early realized Ramseur's division faced extinction. He ordered the remaining infantry units to march to the threatened division's aid.

Breckinridge could not respond, as he had already deployed to counter a strong Union cavalry probe along the Charleston Road. However, Gordon and Rodes moved without delay and arrived at Ramseur's location in a position hidden from enemy observation. In a desperate struggle, Ramseur had somehow fought Union cavalry and the Sixth Corps to a standstill. Still, his unit was in immediate danger of being swamped by the remaining two corps which had negotiated Berryville Canyon and had massed for the attack.

Early, true to his disposition, ordered the newly arrived divisions to attack the Federal right flank (Nineteenth Corps) as it deployed against his left flank (see diagram 7). Evans' brigade of Gordon's division encountered heavy resistance and fell back in disorder. Subsequently, Early's counterattack momentarily halted and the situation threatened to deteriorate further. Seven unsupported guns of Braxton's artillery remained as the only organized force in that immediate sector of Early's line. Unable to shoot because Evans' men were in the line of fire, the artillerymen stood firm. Braxton ordered them to load double canister and to fire on his order once the fleeing Confederates passed their line.²⁵ With the advancing Federals scant yards from his position, cannoneers falling at their guns from Yankee small-arms volleys, Braxton ordered his gun crews to fire. When the smoke cleared, all the artillerymen could observe was "a field of flying, disorganized men."²⁶ A soldier in an advancing Iowa regiment wrote his parents that at sixty yards "the Reb cannon fired." Absolute terror clutched the survivors and they stampeded to the rear as they discarded "knapsacks, haversacks, guns, and cartridge boxes."²⁷

Early immediately resumed the counterattack and both the Sixth and

Nineteenth Corps dissolved into chaos until heroic individuals managed to rally the two corps and establish a defensive line.²⁸ With half the day passed and Sheridan's army apparently beaten, Early stated "a splendid victory had been gained."²⁹ Under critical scrutiny, this remark seems premature, since the best Confederate division commander, Rodes, had been killed, Ramseur's division had suffered massive casualties, and Sheridan had the fresh Eighth Corps and a tenacious, sizable cavalry unit still available to renew his offensive. Apparently "Old Jube" deemed Sheridan similar to previous Union commanders who retreated once they endured a setback. Ruining the fact he had no additional troops to continue his counterattack, Early waited for Sheridan's anticipated retreat.

Unwilling to settle for defeat, however, the volatile Irishman ordered Crook's Eighth Corps to attack Early's left flank where Rodes' and Gordon's divisions were reorganizing their positions.³⁰ Approximately the same time, Breckinridge's division, badly depleted as a result of its struggle against the Union cavalry, arrived. While positioning these brigades on his right flank to augment Ramseur's mauled unit, Early noted his left flank cavalry retiring in disorder from the repeated hammer strokes of the Union mounted arm. He ordered Breckinridge to that flank to counter this latest threat. No sooner had Breckinridge remedied this plight, than Early's cavalry on his right flank crumbled. Realizing he could no longer maintain a defense line, "Old Jube" ordered a general withdrawal. While complying with this directive, Breckinridge's worn out division was charged by Merritt's cavalry division. Under this unstoppable deluge of trampling horses and slashing sabers, Breckinridge's withdrawal degenerated into rout. Rodes' and Gordon's divisions followed. Only brilliant rearguard action by Ramseur's remnants and the artillery,

coupled with the onset of darkness, slowed the Union horsemen's pursuit and prevented Early's destruction. Extracting his beaten army from Winchester, he moved southward to reorganize.³¹

Both armies fought the Battle of Winchester from 2:00 A.M. until 5:00 P.M.³² Naturally, the North rejoiced while Southerners concentrated on reasons for the defeat. Early fixed the blame on the superiority of Union cavalry and the comparative inefficiency of his mounted force.³³ Others joined him in this indictment. An artilleryman wrote that Sheridan's overwhelming cavalry won the day, for his infantry frontal assaults repeatedly failed.³⁴ An infantryman wrote his parents that "the cavalry acted shamefully at Winchester."³⁵ Others, less discriminating in their accusations, simply believed that with proper leadership they would have beaten Sheridan.³⁶ On the other hand, one of a more sanguine nature assuredly remarked that Winchester had been a "splendid fight."³⁷ Lee placidly received the news and wired the Secretary of War that the "enemy's attack was resisted from early in the day until near night when Early was compelled to retire."³⁸

Confederate casualties totaled 3,611 while Sheridan's army suffered 4,962.³⁹ Although Sheridan experienced greater losses, he could readily replace them. Early entertained little hope he could anticipate this salvation. One other inescapable fact remained. Early's previously unbroken victory string had terminated. Still eager for a fight, "Old Jube" realized he needed a stunning victory to reverse his sudden declining fortunes in the Shenandoah Valley.

On 20 September Early moved his torn forces south up the Valley to Fisher's Hill. He immediately tackled his most pressing problem, the reorganization of his command. Early transferred Ramseur to command

Rodes' larger division and appointed Brigadier General John Pegram to lead Ramseur's old command. Unfortunately for the Confederate Valley Army, Breckinridge received orders to return promptly with his division to the Department of Southwest Virginia.⁴⁰ Civilian authorities in Richmond guaranteed "Old Jube" reinforcements to replace this loss, but if Sheridan moved quickly, these additions would place only a distant second in a race with him. Aware of this problem, Early also realized his small army would have difficulty contending with Sheridan's in open terrain. However, the entrenchments at Fisher's Hill offered opportunity to defeat the Federals if Sheridan erred or Early got lucky.⁴¹

The Union army appeared four miles north of Fisher's Hill late on the twentieth and consumed the next two days reconnoitering the Confederate positions and consolidating its logistical support. Additionally, Sheridan's signalers intercepted a bogus message, sent by Early, which confused the Union high command about the size of the Rebel force. This distraction rewarded "Old Jube" with further respite.⁴² Nevertheless, Sheridan had his orders and he decided to attack. Under the cover of heavy timber and rolling terrain, he maneuvered his forces to within 700 yards of Early's trenches and constructed his own breastworks. His reconnaissance revealed little opportunity for success with a direct frontal assault against the Rebel entrenchments and no chance for success with a flanking movement on Early's right because of the terrain. However, detecting a weakness on Early's left flank due to a paucity of troops, Sheridan ordered Crook's Eighth Corps to maneuver during the evening of 21 September to a concealed area on the Confederate left flank (see diagram 8). By marching through heavy timbers and rugged ravines, Crook would be in position to strike Early's left flank on the

afternoon of 22 September.⁴³

Early, upon observing the Union preparations to his front, knew Sheridan planned an attack which his beleaguered army would not repel. Subsequently, he ordered a withdrawal for the evening of 22 September, a maneuver which his forces never executed. At 4:00 P.M. on the twenty-second, Crook smashed through Lomax's screening cavalry force, scattered the survivors like chaff, and engulfed the left rear of Early's defensive line. Simultaneously, Sheridan directed the remaining two corps to assault Early's front. Gallantly, Ramseur attempted to counter head-on Crook's avalanche while Pegram maneuvered to assist him. At that moment the Sixth and Nineteenth Corps collided into Early's fluid line and, as Early related, "the mischief could not be remedied."⁴⁴ Perhaps remembering the Union cavalry's effectiveness at Winchester, no doubt horrified at the prospect of being outflanked and overwhelmed, Early's infantry stampeded.⁴⁵ Attempting to rally the disintegrating organizations, Lieutenant Colonel A. S. Pendleton, Early's adjutant general, fell mortally wounded. Again, as at Winchester, the artillerymen stood firm and manned their guns; but this time they were overrun. Their intrepidity, however, prevented the immediate destruction of the Confederate army.⁴⁶ Subsequent annihilation of the Confederate army never materialized since the Union cavalry, due to Major General Torbert's timidity, failed to mount an effective pursuit. Early's losses amounted to 1,235; of these 1,000 were prisoners. Sheridan suffered only 528 casualties; most of these were struck by Rebel artillery fire. Knowing his troops were shattered and exhausted, Early retreated to Port Republic with the hope that Sheridan's losses and necessity to regroup would slow any Federal pursuit and allow the Confederates time to reorganize and consolidate.⁴⁷

Early's official report to Lee echoed the reasons behind his earlier defeat. "The enemy's immense superiority in cavalry and the inefficiency of the greater part of mine has been the cause of all my disasters."⁴⁸ An infantryman, perhaps one of the veterans who fled in terror, concurred when he wrote "our cavalry ran like sheep."⁴⁹ Perhaps more pointedly, a dejected Rebel commented that the "disgraceful affair" was "another scene of somebody's incompetence."⁵⁰ Although Lee wired Richmond authorities simply that Early's left flank fell back, an enemy force enveloped his rear, and compelled him to retire,⁵¹ Early was aware of Lee's subtle annoyance. "Old Jube's" superior informed him he would send to the Valley Major General Joseph Kershaw's division, a force Lee stated would offset Sheridan's numerical superiority and enable Early to vanquish his Federal opponent. Lee mistakenly believed Sheridan had only 12,000 infantry instead of the 30,000 plus he actually commanded. More penetratingly, the Confederate commanding general intimated Early's old tendency to fight piecemeal by divisions instead of with his concentrated strength could have had some bearing on the reversals. Nevertheless, Lee expressed his continued confidence in Early and encouraged him to maintain his indomitable offensive-minded spirit.⁵²

Although Sheridan's second victory in four days enthused his superiors and the Northern populace, he displayed personal disappointment. Despite careful planning by his staff and excellent execution by his infantry corps, Sheridan felt he lost a complete victory due to the ineptness of his cavalry corps. His frustration and anger exploded on 25 September when he relieved Averell of his division on the grounds of incompetence.⁵³

Confederate civilian reaction mirrored the opposite image of its

counterpart's celebration. Early's caustic nature had earned him numerous critics, especially in certain civilian levels of the Confederate leadership structure. Virginia's popular governor, William ("Extra Billy") Smith, wrote Lee and asked for Early's dismissal. Lee refused, and to strengthen his argument, obtained from Secretary of War Seddon and President Davis favorable endorsements concerning Early's future service.⁵⁴ Consequently, Smith's accusations did not immediately bear fruit. However, a public seed of doubt had been planted as to Early's competence. As a result, two senators accused Early of intoxication at Winchester. Although this allegation was disproved,⁵⁵ Early knew his future service as an independent commander was doubtful unless he crushed Sheridan. The old campaigner recognized he would need an immediate change in circumstances to realize this condition.

Retreating southward, the dejected Rebels lacked shoes, proper clothing, arms, and ammunition.⁵⁶ More discomfiting to Early was the knowledge expressed by one of his soldiers.

Many of the rank and file expressed the belief that our army would not repel an attack with the same composure and courage as formerly . . . hence the almost universal opinion . . . that we were liable to break the first time we were vigorously attacked.⁵⁷

"Old Jube" realized he had to conquer this resignation or the civilian authorities clamoring for his dismissal would receive their reward. Help came soon. Kershaw's division of 2,700 infantrymen arrived on 26 September while Brigadier General Thomas Rosser's cavalry brigade of 600 troopers linked with Early on 5 October. With the arrival of these reinforcements, Early boldly planned to wrench the initiative from Sheridan and drive him from the Valley.⁵⁸

As Early reorganized, Sheridan executed his secondary mission. With an effort similar to Sherman's "March to the Sea," Sheridan's cavalry burned crops, barns, mills, farm equipment, and some private dwellings and removed all livestock they did not consume. Some contemporary accounts mentioned that Sheridan received much satisfaction from the pursuit of this policy.⁵⁹ During these Union predatory excursions, numerous skirmishes flared in which the Confederate forces generally drove the raiders away. Such triumphs, although consummated against small bodies of Union cavalry, restored, at least superficially, the confidence of the Confederate forces, especially that of the maligned "buttermilk rangers."⁶⁰ Faith in Early's abilities resurfaced in some of the doubting quarters in Richmond, particularly those offices close to President Davis.⁶¹ This increased assurance exacted its toll, however, as casualties steadily mounted.⁶²

Due to an overextended supply line and increased guerrilla activity in his rear depots, Sheridan opted to retrace his steps, and at the same time, systematically destroy everything of military value neglected during the pursuit of Early's army. Grant concurred with his subordinate's decision despite political pressures from Washington. On 5 October Sheridan's masses marched northward.⁶³

The addition of Rosser's renowned Laurel Brigade had seemingly rejuvenated the Valley cavalry to a level comparable to the grayclad troopers J. E. B. Stuart had led in baffling and mastering Union horsemen in years past. Early's cavalry relentlessly followed and pressured Sheridan's retreating army. Annoyed by the continual harassment which cost him wagons, artillery pieces, and numerous prisoners, Sheridan ordered Major General Torbett, his cavalry corps commander, "to give

Rosser a drubbing next morning or get whipped himself."⁶⁴

The two antagonists clashed on 9 October in a classical cavalry donnybrook. Both sides, utilizing mainly sabers, struggled in a whirling cyclone of frothing horses and slashing steel. With the outcome scarcely in doubt due to the massive Federal numerical superiority, the battle lasted two hours, after which both Rebel flanks crumbled simultaneously. Panic stampeded Rosser's cavalry for twenty-six miles and did not subside until the survivors reached the haven of Early's infantry. Union horsemen nicknamed the Confederate debacle the "Woodstock Races." Rosser lost 300 men, eleven artillery pieces, and all his supply and headquarters wagons.⁶⁵ In his usual manner, Early sarcastically remarked, "The laurel is a running vine."⁶⁶

On 12 October Sheridan, now underestimating his opponent's refusal to concede defeat, ordered the Sixth Corps to transfer back to Grant at Petersburg. Upon obtaining this intelligence, Early grasped its significance and planned to attack Sheridan's weakened array. Arriving at the familiar environs of Fisher's Hill, five miles south of Sheridan's encampment at Cedar Creek, Early conducted a reconnaissance in force in order to provoke Sheridan into a fatal error.⁶⁷ In addition to his indefatigable fighting spirit, two other factors stimulated Early into making this maneuver. Sheridan's total war policy demonstrated to "Old Jube" the actions of a man "outside the path of civilization." Before the hated Yankees incinerated the Valley into "one great desert," Early had to prevent further depredations. Not only was his army starved from this blasphemous scheme, but Lee's army at Petersburg also faced daily famine.⁶⁸ Even more importantly, Lee wired "Old Jube" on 12 October that with the reinforcements sent him, forces which weakened Lee

considerably, Early had the capability to defeat Sheridan.⁶⁹ Armed with such encouragement, Early sallied forth to crush his antagonist. In a sharp skirmish, Early's army mauled one of Sheridan's divisions. This event convinced the Irishman he had erred in dispatching Wright's corps, and he recalled it before it had traveled a day's march.⁷⁰

Knowing he had to act quickly and decisively, Early sent Gordon and Captain Jed Hotchkiss, his topographical engineer, to a Confederate signal station on Three Top Mountain from where they could observe the Union displacement. In stunned revelation they viewed the entire Union camp and noted all artillery and regimental revetments. Of far greater value was the observation of an unprotected left flank exposing Sheridan's noncontinuous defensive line. Apparently, Sheridan had believed the Massanutten Mountain Range, with the Shenandoah River at its base, constituted a physical barrier impassable to Early's forces.⁷¹ Promptly, the two officers returned to their commander with a sketch map of the Union camp. Both Early's Memoir and Gordon's Reminiscences claim credit for originating the idea of the surprise attack on that unshielded flank. Reports of other key participants do not clarify the claims since they disagree also.⁷² All division commanders did unite, however, in their enthusiasm for the attack and did concur it bore the seeds of a tremendous victory. At midnight on the eighteenth the Army of the Valley moved to assail an unsuspecting, overconfident foe.⁷³

At 5:00 A.M. the next morning Early's gray tidal wave smashed over the Eighth and Nineteenth Corps on the Union left flank (see diagram 9). Totally surprised,⁷⁴ some half-awake, others still asleep, most generally unarmed, the terrified Federals decamped abruptly with no semblance of military organization.⁷⁵ General Wright, acting army commander in

Sheridan's absence, realized the officers would be unable to halt their fleeing soldiers and ordered the still intact Sixth Corps to retire to a more tenable position where they could help rally their routed comrades and perhaps delay Early's avalanche.⁷⁶ By 9:30 A.M. Early, unable to conceal his delight, paraphrased Napoleon's remark after the French victory at Austerlitz by exclaiming, "The sun of Middleton! the sun of Middleton!"⁷⁷ The Confederate attack had netted 1,300 prisoners, eighteen cannon, numerous small arms, and transport wagons and had compelled the Sixth Corps to retreat twice. Rebel losses were negligible.⁷⁸ Early sent Lieutenant Mann Page of his staff to inform his division commanders to continue the assault in order to rout the Sixth Corps and complete the victory. Page returned and related Kershaw's and Gordon's units were at that moment too scattered to pressure effectively the still only organized Union infantry in the vicinity. Kershaw also reported that Union cavalry had brushed aside the screening Confederate horsemen and was harassing his infantrymen.⁷⁹ Reorganizing his forces, Early ordered one final assault. According to one of the advancing infantrymen, the Sixth Corps commenced "a galling fire" upon the gray horde.⁸⁰ Despite "Old Jube's" directives and partial success, his weary soldiers lost their momentum, wavered, then dropped to the ground for protection. With Union cavalry gathering in force on his left flank and having a considerable advantage in the open country, large numbers of his soldiers plundering the enemy's camp in the rear, and a murderous fire flaming from his front, Early decided to stop the attack, consolidate his gains, and carry off the captured artillery and supplies. Despite Gordon's pleas to continue at least an artillery assault if the infantry could not advance, Early remarked "enough glory had been won for one day" and refused to

consider further offensive actions.⁸¹

During the next five hours only sporadic skirmishes erupted. In this interval, in a scene seemingly enacted for an opera, Sheridan conducted the poetic "Ride from Winchester," rallied his disheartened army, witnessed the thinness of Early's line, and prepared a counter-attack. Unable to utilize Crook's still demoralized Eighth Corps, Sheridan planned additional responsibilities for his two powerful cavalry divisions. Approximately 3:30 P.M. Sheridan's vengeful legions plowed with overwhelming momentum into Gordon's overextended division and routed those unfortunates almost immediately (see diagram 10). Brigadier General George A. Custer's cavalry poured into the breach and toppled the flanks of Confederate units on either side. Panic diffused like an infection as the Confederates imitated that morning's Union disintegration. Despite the appeals and threats of Early's officers, all-consuming terror of the Union horsemen grasped the Confederate infantrymen until "there was no holding them." Like the previous major battles, Early's artillerymen cemented themselves to their guns and attempted to delay the charging Federals while his infantry conducted "the greatest stampede the world has ever known."⁸² Gordon had beseeched Early that morning to pursue vigorously the broken Union army since panic-stricken and scattered troops were rarely rallied under such intensive pressure. Early had not heeded this axiom, but Sheridan understood the lesson well. With whirling sabers and cyclonic hooves, the mounted cavalry trampled or captured hundreds of fleeing Rebels. Only darkness and dense woods prevented Early's complete annihilation.⁸³

At New Market, miles to the south of the debacle, Early managed to rally his remnants. His force had lost 1,860 casualties, 1,050

prisoners, and twenty-three Confederate artillery pieces in addition to the Federal artillery seized that morning. Sheridan's army also retained the field. However, its losses indicated the slaughter its soldiers had endured during the Confederate attack: 4,074 Yankees fell as casualties while 1,591 became prisoners.⁸⁴ Numerous Confederate accounts blamed the rout on the plunderers' duty-shirking actions and the resultant demoralization of soldiers who remained in the front lines.⁸⁵ As to the ultimate effect produced by these joint causes, Brigadier General Rosser eloquently remarked, "The sun never rose on a more glorious victory and never set on a more inglorious defeat."⁸⁶ "Old Jube" simply commented, "The Yankees got whipped, we got scared."⁸⁷

After the Battle of Cedar Creek both armies settled into the customary pattern of skirmishing and marching. A few Confederate cavalry raids met success, particularly the expedition against Fort Kelly. Generally, however, all-too-familiar misfortune befell the grayclad troopers.⁸⁸ Around the first of November Early again reorganized his cavalry by dissolving Johnson's brigade and placing most of these men in depleted infantry units. All field grade officers in the brigade subsequently tendered their resignations and then, adding fuel to Early's political misfortune, registered complaints through their political patrons.⁸⁹ Also that month worse than normal seasonal weather constrained both armies to enter winter quarters, Early at Staunton and Sheridan at Winchester. Fighting at Petersburg subsequently required both commanders to transfer troops to their respective superiors, and with these withdrawals, operational activity, except for guerrilla forays, ceased. In early February 1865, snowstorms "worthy of more northern latitudes" deferred even these activities.⁹⁰

Unable to sustain his army due to the severe summer drought and Sheridan's destruction of the granary, Early had to scatter the majority of his forage-dependent cavalry and artillery to locales outside the Valley. Unfortunately for Early and his dispersed command, on 27 February Sheridan, having received from Grant instructions to move with his cavalry and destroy the rail center at Lynchburg, departed his winter quarters. Early's 1,000 infantrymen and four pieces of artillery braced themselves to engage the 10,000 Union cavalymen and supporting artillery in what would be the last act of the Valley melodrama.⁹¹

"Old Jube" dispatched messages for his cavalry to assemble immediately, but only Rosser and one hundred men congregated in time to delay the enemy. Federal cavalry easily swept this force aside at Mount Crawford on 1 March. The next day a defiant Early awaited at Waynesboro and attempted to bluff Sheridan into halting so that he would have time to extricate some artillery and supplies without the assistance of horses. This time his deception failed as Custer and three dismounted regiments easily outflanked the left side of Early's beleaguered force⁹² while, simultaneously, the remaining cavalymen mounted a frontal assault in the fashion which had routed the Confederates in their previous major encounters. The only difference in results of this charge and its antecedents was the percentage of Early's force which escaped. Numerous ill-clad, starving Confederates simply threw down their weapons and surrendered to their obviously delighted captors.⁹³ One prisoner remarked, "I never saw men in better humor than these Yankees were."⁹⁴ Major Jedediah Hotchkiss stated that those who did not capitulate outright conducted "a perfect rout along the road up the mountain."⁹⁵ Most did not travel far, as only Early, the majority of his staff, and fifteen

to twenty others eluded the mounted enemy and escaped to the mountains. With the termination of this nearly bloodless engagement, organized warfare in the Valley ceased.⁹⁶ Four weeks later Early received the telegram relieving him from command.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. Freeman, Dispatches, no. 161, p. 287; Early, Memoir, p. 66; Early, Narrative, pp. 399-400.
2. Joseph P. Cullen, "The Battle of Winchester," Civil War Times Illustrated 8, no. 8 (1969): 5.
3. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, pp. 445-446.
4. Robert E. Lee to Major General W. H. F. Lee, 12 July 1864, Robert E. Lee Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.
5. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 2, p. 433.
6. Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, 23 July 1864, Lee Papers; Early, Narrative, p. 401; Bradley T. Johnson Diary, 29 July 1864, Bradley T. Johnson Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.; Bushong, pp. 224-225.
7. Early, Narrative, p. 405.
8. Sheridan, 1:462-463.
9. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 2, p. 202.
10. Early, Narrative, p. 406.
11. Early, Memoir, p. 80. His favorite strategem was to conduct a long night march to the ... and then return the next day with much publicity and show of force. Ibid., p. 75.
12. David T. Copeland, 30 October 1864, David T. Copeland Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.
13. Sheridan, 1:467, 475; Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 995-996.
14. Sheridan, 1:483; Cullen, p. 7. Grant apparently read a page from the Confederate strategy manual. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 1027.
15. Early, Memoir, p. 80.
16. Sheridan, 1:484.

17. Copeland Diary, 3 September 1864.
18. Stephen D. Ramseur to his wife, 6 September 1864, Ramseur Papers.
19. Wesley Merritt, "Sheridan in the Shenandoah," in Battles and Leaders of the Civil War, 4 vols., ed. Clarence C. Buel and Robert U. Johnson (New York: The Century Co., 1884), 4:503. Skirmishing became a near daily event throughout the campaign. Berkeley, mid-July to early September 1864, pp. 89-95; Hotchkiss, 18 July to 13 September 1864, pp. 216-228.
20. Stephen D. Ramseur to David Schenk and to his wife, several letters, the first half of September 1864, Ramseur Papers.
21. John W. Deforest, A Volunteer's Adventures (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1946), cited by Stackpole, Sheridan, p. 182.
22. Sheridan, 2:10.
23. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 60-61; Early, Narrative, pp. 415-416. These Confederate figures compare favorably with those cited in Samuel J. Moore, "Early's Strength at Winchester," Confederate Veteran 11, no. 9 (1903): 396. Moore was Early's Inspector General and gave Early's strength as approximately 8,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry, and 1,000 artillery. Early had again reorganized his cavalry. Ransom had become physically unfit for field duty. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 993.
24. Sheridan, 2:18.
25. Early, Memoir, pp. 84-86. Canister was an artillery projectile consisting of a tin can filled with cast-iron or lead balls that scattered immediately on leaving the muzzle. With much the same effect as the later-day machine gun, canister was fired most effectively at ranges of between 100 and 200 yards. Boatner, p. 119.
26. Thomas Carter to John W. Daniel, 28 November 1894, Daniel Papers.
27. Nathan G. Dye to his parents, 2 October 1864, Nathan G. Dye Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.
28. Early, Memoir, pp. 86-87; Sheridan, 2:24.
29. Early, Memoir, p. 87.
30. Sheridan, 2:24-25.
31. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 555; Early, Memoir, pp. 88-90. The artillery received several laudatory comments for its conduct of this withdrawal. Wise, 2:884-887.

32. Cullen, p. 43. In military reports this conflict was officially designated the Third Battle of Winchester. Stackpole, Sheridan, pp. 189, 232.

33. Early, Memoir, p. 90.

34. Thomas Carter to John W. Daniel, 28 November 1894, Daniel Papers.

35. William B. Pettit to his parents, 21 September 1864, Pettit Papers. Editors of the Mobile Register, the Lynchburg Republican, the Charlottesville Chronicle, and the Richmond Whig concurred with this assessment. J. Cutter Andrews, The South Reports the Civil War (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), p. 420.

36. I. G. Bradwell, "With Early in the Valley," Confederate Veteran 22, no. 11 (1914): 505.

37. Stephen D. Ramseur to his wife, 25 September 1864, Ramseur Papers.

38. Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon, 20 September 1864, Robert E. Lee Volumes, Official Telegrams, Duke University, Durham, N.C. After the war, Lee's Assistant Adjutant wrote that Lee believed this battle was the best fought conflict of the war of which he had knowledge. Jubal A. Early to Charles S. Venable, 9 July 1881, Venable Papers.

39. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 112-118, 555.

40. Early, Narrative, pp. 429-430; Early, Memoir, pp. 92-93.

41. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 2, pp. 877-880; Early, Narrative, p. 429.

42. Early, Memoir, p. 93; Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 1009-1010.

43. Sheridan, 2:36.

44. Early, Memoir, pp. 93-94; Early, Narrative, p. 429.

45. Stephen D. Ramseur to his wife, 25 September 1864, Ramseur Papers.

46. Early, Memoir, p. 94. Sheridan's forces captured twelve artillery pieces. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 556.

47. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 59, 428, 556, 558.

48. Ibid., p. 558.

49. William B. Pettit to his parents, 24 September 1864, Pettit Papers.

50. Bradwell, "Valley," p. 506.
51. Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon, 23 September 1864, Lee Telegrams.
52. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 558-559.
This error the normally accurate Lee made was reputedly the grossest mathematical mistake he committed during the war. Freeman, Lieutenants, 3:585.
53. Sheridan, 2:41-45.
54. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 2, p. 894. Smith had served under Early as a brigade commander and bore personal animosity toward "Old Jube" from that experience.
55. Marcus Wright, several letters, folder no. 10-F, Marcus J. Wright Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. Mrs. Edmondston's diary revealed that she hoped Early had left "the region of Monongahela Whiskey and Apple Brandy." Catherine Ann Devereaux Edmondston, Journal of a Secesh Lady, ed. Beth G. Crabtree and James W. Patton (Raleigh, N.C.: Division of Archives and History, 1979), 28 August 1864, p. 608; Confederate States of America, Congress, Senate, Committee on Military Affairs, Letter from Lieutenant General J. A. Early, 9 January 1865.
56. Robert E. Lee to General Braxton Bragg, 27 September 1864, Lee Telegrams. Bragg served as President Davis' military advisor during this time period.
57. "Fisher's Hill and Sheridan's Ride," Confederate Veteran 10, no. 4 (1902): 165. Author identified only as a soldier in the 4th Georgia Regiment.
58. Early, Memoir, pp. 96, 98; Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 576.
59. Hudson Strode, "The Next Most Fatal April," The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography 72 (1964): 134; Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 2, p. 308.
60. Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon, 29 September 1864, Lee Telegrams; Stephen D. Ramseur to his wife, 30 September 1864, Ramseur Papers.
61. Josiah Gorgas, The Civil War Diary of General Josiah Gorgas, ed. Frank E. Vandiver (Tuscaloosa, Ala.: University of Alabama Press, 1947), p. 145. Gorgas served as the Chief of Ordnance.
62. Copeland Diary, 10 October 1864.
63. Sheridan, 2:54-56.
64. Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon, 7 October 1864, 9 October

1864, Lee Telegrams; Sheridan, 2:56; Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 431. Torbett's Corps had two cavalry divisions with a total of about 10,000 men. Brigadier General George A. Custer and Major General Wesley Merritt commanded them.

65. Sheridan, 2:57-59.

66. Douglas, p. 314.

67. Early, Memoir, pp. 99-100.

68. Early, Narrative, pp. 437-438; Stephen D. Ramseur to his wife, 10 October 1864, Ramseur Papers; Copeland Diary, 10 October 1864. Copeland noted that all he had eaten was bread baked on 7 October.

69. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 2, p. 892.

70. Early, Memoir, p. 100; Sheridan, 2:60.

71. Union officers did note the weakness of this flank. However, General Crook, the corps commander on that side, believed Early too crushed to attack. Extract of letter from General W. H. Emory to Colonel Benjamin W. Crownshield, in Civil War and Miscellaneous Papers (Boston: Military Historical Society of Massachusetts, 1918), p. 117; Gordon, Reminiscences, pp. 333-335. Sheridan grouped his forces on a series of ridges that did not permit the linear formation customary to battlefields of that era.

72. For example, Hotchkiss stated that Gordon and he devised the attack scheme. Hotchkiss, 17 October 1864, p. 237.

73. Early, Memoir, p. 104.

74. A cardinal sin in military operations. Apparently Sheridan's admonition to his generals "that for a badly beaten general Early had a lot of nerve" fell on deaf ears. Raoul S. Naroll, "Sheridan and Cedar Creek--A Reappraisal," in Military Analysis of the Civil War, eds. of Military Affairs (Millwood, N.Y.: KTO Press, 1977), p. 370.

75. Private Berkeley stated that horses were tied to their picket lines and some artillery batteries were still parked. Berkeley, 19 October 1864, p. 105.

76. Sheridan had been called to Washington for a conference with Grant and Secretary of War Stanton. He was en route back to his camp, but stopped to spend the evening at Winchester. Sheridan, 2:60-68.

77. Gordon, Reminiscences, p. 359. Middleton was the town near Sheridan's encampment.

78. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 561.

79. Early, Memoir, pp. 107-108; Daniel, "Early," p. 308.

80. D. Augustus Dickert, History of Kershaw's Brigade, quoted in Freeman, Lieutenants, 3:601. An interesting sidelight is the comment that only one division of the Sixth Corps participated in this defense, the other having routed. Morton, p. 337. I find it difficult to comprehend this statement since the apparent devastating defensive fire could not have been the efforts of only one division. Green Mountain bruisers from Vermont, coal miners and iron molders from Pennsylvania, and lumbermen from Wisconsin manned this corps. They were, in the words of an admiring artilleryman, a "hard crowd." Augustus Buell, The Cannoneer: Recollection of Service in the Army of the Potomac (Washington, D.C.: The National Tribune, 1890), p. 274.

81. J. S. McNeily, "Battle of Cedar Creek, Oct. 19, 1864," Southern Historical Society Papers 32 (1904): 231. Captain McNeily served in the Eighth Virginia Regiment. Buell reported that the assault, before faltering, resulted in the most desperate hand-to-hand fighting, following the one at the "Bloody Angle" at Spotsylvania, that he had encountered during the war. Buell, p. 299; Early, Memoir, pp. 108-109; Gordon, Reminiscences, pp. 352-360. Private Berkeley stated that Colonel Carter, the Chief of Artillery, had positioned forty-five pieces of artillery to shell the Sixth Corps. This concentration of fire would probably have routed the Union force. Berkeley, 19 October 1864, p. 106. Colonel Carter became Early's Artillery Chief after Brigadier General Long was wounded.

82. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, p. 562; Sheridan, 2:82-90; Samuel Sublett to William H. Jones, 3 November 1864, William H. Jones Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. The vocal David Copeland wrote "we ran like they [sic] was no rally in us." Copeland Diary, 24 October 1864. Private Samuel P. Collier told his sister Cedar Creek was the "decidedly worse [sic] stampede" his unit had conducted. Samuel P. Collier to his sister, 23 October 1864, Samuel P. Collier Papers, North Carolina Department of Archives and History, Raleigh, N.C. Major Hotchkiss wrote of "the noble work" accomplished by the cannoneers. Hotchkiss, 19 October 1864, p. 240. After the battle Early wrote to Colonel Carter that during the campaign the artillery had always distinguished itself. Berkeley, Appendix 2, p. 148.

83. Gordon, Reminiscences, p. 360; Sheridan, 2:90-92.

84. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 137, 564. Major General Ramseur was one of the casualties. Mortally wounded, he later expired in Federal hands. Confederate regimental and company grade officer losses were extremely high. Probably the majority were ridden down as they attempted to rally their broken troops. Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon, 21 October 1864, Lee Telegrams.

85. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 562-563; Copeland Diary, 24 October 1864. Captain Buck wrote that the army threw away a "great victory" because half the starving and ill-clad soldiers abandoned their posts to pillage the bountiful Federal camp. Samuel D. Buck, "Battle of Cedar Creek, Va., Oct. 19th, 1864," Southern Historical Society Papers 30 (1902): 107.

86. Gordon, Reminiscences, p. 361.

87. Douglas, p. 319.

88. Robert E. Lee to James A. Seddon, 13 November, 22 November, 23 December 1864, Lee Telegrams. Rosser conducted a raid that netted 700 prisoners, four field pieces, four siege guns, horses, mules, and large numbers of supplies and destroyed 200 wagons. The Rebels lost only four men.

89. Special Orders 101, 2 November 1864, Johnson Papers.

90. Early, Memoir, pp. 117, 119; Copeland Diary, 3 November 1864; Berkeley, mid-November 1864 to end of February 1865, pp. 111-120; Hotchkiss, mid-November 1864 to February 1865, pp. 243-254; Oscar B. Ireland to his father, 7 February 1865, Oscar Brown Ireland Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

91. Early, Memoir, pp. 121-124. This force belonged to Brigadier General Wharton's division.

92. Golladay, p. 31. Early attempted to anchor this flank on a small creek but a one-eighth mile gap existed between it and the last man. He dispatched a message telling General Wharton to extend the line, but Wharton failed to react.

93. Early, Memoir, pp. 124-125.

94. Berkeley, 2 March 1865, p. 122.

95. Hotchkiss, 2 March 1865, p. 259.

96. Early, Memoir, p. 125. Only one Confederate was killed. This figure reflects the extent of the surrender rate and panic. Early, Narrative, p. 464.

CHAPTER V
WAS IT WORTH IT?

Nine and one-half months after Jubal Early launched his bid for possible immortality (or notoriety depending on one's view), the gamble ended. During its course the Valley Army had expended resources needed elsewhere by the Confederacy. In view of this outlay the obvious question must be asked. Did Early's campaign return a profit to its Confederate investors or did it squander men, equipment, and money on a futile mission?

One disappointed infantryman believed the Confederate commitment wasted these items. He believed the only accomplishment was to "get a lot of people killed."¹ Sergeant Joseph McMurran judged the Washington expedition harshly since he felt it mortgaged later operations. He opined that after Early withdrew from the city's defenses, the army, including the famed Stonewall Brigade, lost faith in the future.²

Notwithstanding Linker's "professional" judgment, "Old Jube's" excursion did benefit the South militarily. Despite the odds against him Early accomplished several objectives. He saved Lynchburg, the communications and logistical center vital to prolonging the Confederacy's fading existence. His clearing operation in the Valley wrecked Hunter's army, scrapped Sigel's and dampened Hunter's careers, and permitted a peaceful harvest of the undamaged granaries.³ An important Federal depot at Harpers Ferry fell to the Valley Army. This capture replenished

the Army of Northern Virginia's near-empty warehouses. After he crossed the Potomac, his destruction of key sections of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and the Chesapeake & Ohio Canal interrupted Union communications in that part of the country for three months.⁴ Wallace's defeat at the Monocacy erased all significant obstructions in Early's path to Washington and allowed him to bring firsthand the knowledge of the conflict to Northerners, especially those in the capital. This latter action paralyzed Federal authorities and exposed Halleck as the incompetent he was. In July 1864, Grant had not approached as close to Richmond as Early had Washington.⁵ This event had to embarrass the much-heralded Union offensive. However, besides being embarrassed, Grant's July offensive endured even more humiliation. It ground to a halt as a result of the loss of troops that were transferred to save the capital. "Old Jube's" ransoms from Frederick and Hagerstown increased Confederate coffers by \$220,000. Also from Maryland the Rebels seized immense stocks of horses, herds of cattle, food, and forage.

His subsequent Valley operations achieved Lee's objective of enticing a significant number of Federal troops from Grant's army at Petersburg. Sheridan needed three infantry corps, two cavalry divisions, and supporting artillery to vanquish Early's small organization. This size force, comparable to Lee's own, would have incalculably assisted Grant's siege and possibly have shortened the war by a year.⁶ Another potential force lost to Grant were the 14,500 Federal casualties sustained by Sheridan's army. This figure, larger than Early's total strength, composed an entire Union infantry corps.⁷ A final tribute to Early's value involves the size and composition of the Union force deemed necessary during the winter of 1864-1865 to remain in the Valley to

contain "Old Jube." Cavalry divisions were a commodity Grant desperately needed to shorten the Petersburg siege. However, he concurred with Sheridan's judgment that Early's aggressiveness made it necessary to prolong the siege in order to crush the Confederate Valley Army.

Early demonstrated to the world that the Confederacy, divided and carved up, could still parry with one hand and thrust with the other. Despite Union efforts and incredible odds, the Army of Northern Virginia still owned an offensive punch. By relying on audacity and maneuver, Early conducted a campaign of ruse and movement which did attain the primary goal of retaining sizable bodies of Federal troops in the Valley. As a strategic diversion the campaign militarily must be considered successful.

It is apparent that Early's campaign, viewed in its entirety, directly contributed to the Confederacy's military effort. However, indirectly, the Washington portion of the campaign also proved to be eventually militarily detrimental to the effort. As a result of "Old Jube's" triumphs, Grant's need for corrective actions increased dramatically. The Union commanding general realized he needed to reorganize the confused command structure which controlled the several Departments from Washington to the Valley. Equally important, he had to halt forever the Rebels' annoying tendency to use the Valley as a conduit to Northern territory.⁸ Therefore, in the late summer of 1864, Grant took measures to collect his lien against Jubal Early. Sheridan's 40,000 soldiers supplied the final solution.

The campaign produced one other set of benefits besides the military ones. Although not as easy to grasp, the political consequences mirrored the Southern direct and Northern indirect military gains.

In a democracy, a leader's failures generally glare much sharper than his successes. In the summer of 1864, this fact was very evident. Early's near miss at Washington hurt Lincoln's war strategy. Public faith in the Union's eventual victory dropped dramatically. A portion of Maryland's population and the capital's inhabitants had stared fear in its hypnotizing eyes and succumbed. The expedition aggravated the defeatist environment in which subversive elements, "smoke-filled room" politicians, rumor-mongers, doom-propheying paranoids, and sensational journalists thrived.⁹ After communications were restored, the Washington Chronicle and National Intelligencer published materials which compelled Northerners outside the endangered area to believe Washington had been miraculously rescued. To many, this narrow deliverance symbolized an act of national humiliation.¹⁰ Some feared foreign recognition of the Confederacy again seemed possible. On 25 July the London Times claimed, "The Confederacy is more formidable than ever."

In June Lincoln had quelled his party's internal dissension enough to secure the renomination. However, despairing Republicans believed events in the late spring and early summer doomed his reelection. The legacy of military defeats and stalemates darkened the president's political atmosphere. Early's raid appeared to be the incident to push Lincoln's chances to the brink of the abyss. By August Republican political experts rated Lincoln's reelection as improbable.¹¹ One wrote, "Lincoln knew he was going to be badly beaten unless some great change in [the] military situation" occurred.¹² Professional soldiers agreed with their political counterparts. Philip Sheridan stated that only victories in the field would maintain the Republican administration in office.¹³ A family with political-military connections related that the Union

needed a major victory to break the nation's "political fever."¹⁴ This delirium affected some elements in the army as well. A soldier in the Eighth Vermont Regiment wrote his parents that the army was "perfectly demoralized" and in a "state of mutiny." There was no chance for victory.¹⁵ This unrest magnified Lincoln's political troubles as the summer dragged on and the war emerged as the only campaign issue.

Southerners in several professions concurred with these forecasts of Lincoln's political demise. Newspapermen throughout the Confederacy predicted Lincoln's defeat would bring peace and Southern independence. Confederate congressmen echoed these prophecies.¹⁶ Brigadier General Grimes wrote his wife that Union despair and defeatism would elect McClellan president.¹⁷

Obviously, Lincoln needed military victories; the more spectacular the better. His political future depended directly on these events. Since Early's Washington expedition had deeply embarrassed and rankled Northern authorities, military, and civilian population, and his late summer activities had continued in similar veins,¹⁸ Lincoln considered the Confederate general's defeat as an excellent catalyst for renewing his political fortunes. Some military men assented to this assessment. The politically minded Eltinge stated that Lincoln would not be reelected unless Sheridan defeated Early in the Valley.¹⁹ Another wrote as late as 4 September that McClellan's election seemed imminent unless Union forces defeated Early.²⁰ Grant was reported to have told Sheridan to press immediately after Early in order not only to shorten the war but to aid Lincoln's campaign.²¹ Thus the Union's indirect military and political benefits from Early's raid had joined. Grant's military necessity to destroy "Old Jube's" army had coupled with Lincoln's

political urgencies to activate a determined effort to destroy a dangerous opponent.

With the beginning of Confederate reversals in September 1864, Abraham Lincoln's political fortunes rose.²² Sherman's triumph at Atlanta initiated the process. A jubilant Northerner wrote that victory had made it the "duty" of all Unionists to settle their differences.²³ Thurlow Weed wrote Lincoln's Secretary of State that the president's reelection was now possible.²⁴ From New York, Edmund Eltinge wrote his son that Sherman's success had reversed Republican despair in New York and that a Federal victory in the Valley would cement Lincoln's victory in the state.²⁵ Destiny smiled on Eltinge's desires. The next day Union authorities received from Sheridan a telegram stating, "We have sent them [Early's army] whirling through Winchester."²⁶ The message thrilled the nation. Although military leaders considered it only a narrow victory for Sheridan,²⁷ the Northern press immediately grasped the event's political significance. Whitelaw Reid of the Cincinnati Gazette summed up the general opinion. "The general apathy and discontent and the apparent certainty of Mr. Lincoln's defeat" had all changed. Horace Greeley, an extreme critic of the administration, declared the New York Tribune would "henceforth fly the banner of Abraham Lincoln for President."²⁸ The Eltinges celebrated by agreeing that Sheridan's victory was "just the encouragement needed to [the] administration."²⁹ Secretary Welles wrote that Sheridan's victory had a "party political influence . . . not gratifying to the opponents of the Administration."³⁰ One month later Sheridan's poetic victory³¹ at Cedar Creek erupted additional enthusiasm for Lincoln's war policy. The flight of Early's army preceded the stampede of McClellan's supporters

by only a few days.³²

One final effect reveals the military-political relationship of Early's expedition. Lincoln's administration took concerted actions to allow soldiers the opportunity to vote. Although earlier indications favored a preference by Union soldiers for the Democratic ticket, the early autumn victories appeared to reverse that opinion. Election results verified the validity of this perception. The army voted overwhelmingly for the president.³³ This voter turnout had to be important. One historian has reported that a change of only 83,000 votes, 2 percent of the cast ballots, would have elected McClellan.³⁴

Like the military benefits, the political ones initially favored the Confederacy. Unlike the military consequences, however, the final political benefits did not aid the South. Lincoln's reelection guaranteed that the war would only end with the Confederacy's total defeat. In spite of the military gains, no compromise would result.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. Caleb Linker to his family, 17 July 1864, Confederate States of America, Army Archives, Miscellany Letters, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

2. Diary, Sergeant Joseph McMurran, 18 July 1864, Virginia State Library, Richmond, Va. The Stonewall Brigade was perhaps the most famous Confederate organization. Trained and first commanded by "Stonewall" Jackson, it remained a potent fighting force, despite severe attrition, until late in the war. It fought the rearguard action of Lee's army from Petersburg to Appomatox. Boatner, pp. 808-810.

3. Early earned another nickname in Virginia for this feat: "The Great Harvester."

4. Hatton, p. 172.

5. Vandiver, p. 174.

6. Thomas G. Jones to John W. Daniel, 3 July 1904, Daniel Papers.

7. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 118, 124, 137. This figure includes a conservative estimate of 3,000 casualties suffered in the countless skirmishes. Some accounts place the total at 17,000. Buck, "Cedar Creek," p. 110. These estimates do not include Federal casualties from Hunter's and Wallace's defeats, and the fight at Fort Stevens.

8. T. Harry Williams, Lincoln and His Generals (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1952), pp. 326-327. The confused command situation had contributed to Early's success.

9. Randall, p. 198; Nevins, p. 132.

10. Welles, 2:77.

11. Randall, pp. 111, 215.

12. J. K. Herbert to Benjamin F. Butler, 11 August 1864, Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, 5 vols. (Norwood Mass.: The Plimpton Press, 1917).

13. Sheridan, 1:500.

14. Edmund Eltinge to Captain Peter Eltinge, 13 August 1864, Eltinge-Lord Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Captain Eltinge, the company commander of B Company, 156th New York Regiment, had been in state politics in New York before the war.

15. Willard Smith to his family, 19 August 1864, Horace Smith Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C. Smith's regiment was stationed in the Valley.

16. Civil War and Miscellaneous Papers, pp. 214-215.

17. Brigadier General Bryan Grimes to his wife, 8 November 1864, Grimes Letters. By November, Grimes' prediction was only a dream.

18. McNeily, p. 224.

19. Captain Peter Eltinge to his sister, 26 August 1864, Eltinge-Lord Papers.

20. Willard Smith to his family, 4 September 1864, Smith Papers.

21. L. W. Kennon, "The Valley Campaign of 1864," Confederate Veteran 26, no. 12 (1918): 523.

22. Union naval forces under Admiral David G. Farragut had closed Mobile Bay in August. However, the city itself did not capitulate until 4 May 1865. Farragut received a tumultuous hero's welcome in New York. Nevertheless, the land campaigns gloomed the president's future. Nevins, p. 98.

23. Theodore Tilton to Anna E. Dickinson, 5 September 1864, Dickinson Manuscripts, cited by Randall, p. 226.

24. Thurlow Weed to William H. Seward, 10 September 1864, Robert T. Lincoln Collection, nos. 155-156, cited by Randall, p. 226.

25. Edmund Eltinge to Captain Peter Eltinge, 18 September 1864, Eltinge-Lord Papers.

26. Civil War and Miscellaneous Papers, p. 213.

27. Morton, p. 331.

28. Cullen, p. 43.

29. Edmund Eltinge to Captain Peter Eltinge, 9 October 1864, Eltinge-Lord Papers.

30. Welles, 2:153.

31. "Sheridan's Ride" was written after the battle to commemorate the victory. It depicted Sheridan as a godlike hero. Pond, pp. 232-233; Bushong, p. 260.

32. Nevins, pp. 103, 108-109.

33. Ibid., pp. 135-138. Some 10,000 soldiers from Pennsylvania and Maryland in Sheridan's army were granted furloughs to vote in the election. Their ballots carried these two key states for Lincoln. Leech, p. 349.

34. David Donald, Lincoln Reconsidered, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1961), p. 65.

CHAPTER VI
SEEDS OF DEFEAT

Although leaders throughout mankind's martial history have suffered defeat in battles and campaigns, Jubal Early bore the knowledge he numbered among the minute fraction who witnessed the total annihilation of his army, yet survived the debacle himself. For a man of Early's achievements and temperament, the self-sacrifice required to write in his memoirs of his "mortification at seeing the greater part of" his "command" carried "off as prisoners"¹ had to be unrelenting agony. After more than three years of continual personal triumph, he abruptly joined the association of those ill-starred commanders united by one common bond--failure. Reversals such as the one Early experienced necessitate some examination in light of the conditions encompassed by the nature of his occupation. More succinctly, can the contributive elements precipitating the disgrace of the man, considered by Robert E. Lee, according to some contemporary sources, the most adept of his lieutenants after Stonewall Jackson,² be isolated?

Obviously, the general decline of the Confederacy contributed to Early's defeat. Critical students of the era have produced numerous volumes concerning these causal elements and it is not within the purview of this treatise to recapitulate them in their totality. Nevertheless, some of these agents directly influenced the Valley Campaign's outcome and thus need to be mentioned.

The Confederate supply system seldom furnished adequate provisions of any measure to the soldiers in the field. No army, no matter how well-trained and effective as a combat team, can continually produce successful missions without some degree of efficiency in its logistical base. Early's army, withering in an ocean of deprivation, always lacked clothing, food, forage, animals, arms, and ammunition.³ Lacking shoes proved especially burdensome as men, with feet wrapped in blood-clotted rags,⁴ attempted to march without straggling in the heart of an overbearing winter. Hunger was a constant companion. The drought in the summer of 1864 and Sheridan's destruction of the bountiful Valley granary reduced subsistence for men and animals to critical levels.⁵ Unable to receive provisions through supply channels, Early's emaciated army slowly starved.

One additional shortage continually handicapped "Old Jube." In October 1864 the Confederate government ascertained that the conscript population could no longer furnish replacements for the vacancies indicated by steadily rising casualty lists.⁶ Early had grasped this development long before civilian authorities announced it since only ever-diminishing units from Lee's army, not conscripted individuals from a replacement depot, constituted his reinforcements. While Sheridan daily received augmentations to his army, Early could only observe disparagingly the widening numerical gap between the two forces.

Although casualties within the veteran enlisted ranks severely decreased Early's effectiveness, officer losses proved more detrimental to his productivity. When Grant crossed the Rapidan River in May 1864 to initiate his strategy of attrition, Lee's Army of Northern Virginia in the first two major conflicts lost 37 percent of its general officers.

Early's Second Corps, which bore the brunt of these two engagements at The Wilderness and Spotsylvania Court House, suffered 63 percent losses in these grades. Among the regimental and company grade officers casualties appeared pandemic. In some regiments, 50 percent of their officer positions unfilled, lieutenants commanded in lieu of the colonels authorized.⁷ Although battle experience can prove invaluable as a training vehicle, it generally does not substitute for earlier professional training and seldom supersedes the aptitude vital for success in the more responsible positions. When Early departed Lee in June 1864, onerous leadership problems existed within his corps due to the lack of several qualified officers. This disadvantage would prove fatal in the maintenance of discipline and organization, two uncompromising factors essential to the success of any commander's mission.

The ineffectiveness of Early's cavalry needs little additional discussion. Official reports censured the troopers' behavior as beneath contempt. Outnumbered, badly outclassed in equipment and mounts,⁸ the cavalry transformed its generally fruitful, independent spirit into a despicable characteristic indicative of an undisciplined rabble. However, once one peers beneath the murky surface of recriminations, the cavalry's ineffectiveness appears symptomatic of a greater affliction within Early's army: total deterioration of the army's morale--its state of mind associated with confidence, courage, faith, zeal, and expectations.

A symbolic figure of an army's declining morale is its desertion rate. After the war's first year, unauthorized absences in the Confederate army began rising and, after the twin disasters of Vicksburg and Gettysburg in July 1863, increased steadily. Several factors contributed

to this cancer sapping the fiber of the army which, despite being outnumbered, attacked in one-half the major campaigns of the war.⁹ Personal letters of the period reveal torturous news from home. Leaking roofs, downed fences, unplanted crops, sick and starving families preyed on the soldiers' spirits until they abandoned their posts in hopes of assuaging their families' miseries.¹⁰ Difficult marching, physical discomfort from too little food and protective clothing, mud, rain, lice, disease, violent death, and a financial system which on several occasions malfunctioned administratively to result in no pay, also broke soldiers' spirits.¹¹ During the final months of the war, hundreds deserting nightly from all Confederate forces, the problem had become so widespread that officials faced severe difficulties in apprehending deserters from an apathetic population that no longer considered the stigma a crime.¹²

Besides these torments, however, something even more ravaging had to exist to undermine totally the morale structure of the Valley Army. Simply stated, this army lost its heart, soul, and resolve to win no matter what the tribulation. Overworked, worn-out soldiers become dispirited when their view of the future contains not only death, but unrelenting hopelessness. After Cedar Creek one of Early's survivors wrote his parents that the army would no longer fight since it had surrendered all vestiges of discipline and morale. Early's measures to rebuild confidence and organization were insufficient for the task.¹³ Another wrote that resignation to defeat permeated the once proud Second Corps. Continual thrashings of "Lee's Bad Old Man" completely demoralized the army until no expectation of survival, much less victory, gripped the will of every soldier.¹⁴ Prior to Early's "Last Stand" at Waynesboro, Private Henry Berkeley scribbled in his diary that the Confederates had

no possibility of success against the large cavalry force moving against them. "Who will be left to tell the tale?" he wondered.¹⁵ One of his anonymous comrades annotated, "Men's spirits dull, gloomy, and all are evidently hopelessly waiting for we know not what end."¹⁶ These doubts are not the thoughts of a confident army, but those of an army beaten even before a battle.

Perhaps this tumor signaled a trauma existing throughout the Confederacy. Editorials in the Richmond Examiner warned the Union based its hopes of victory on the belief that the Confederacy would die from moral exhaustion and decline of national spirit.¹⁷ Strangling in the coils of military and economic disaster, the Confederacy grew lethargic, then apathetic. Early's army echoed this hopelessness and despair. Pushed beyond the limits of human fortitude, his soldiers believed any sacrifice would be in vain. The intensity of their violent and protracted struggle against overwhelming odds, coupled with the enormity of demands exacted of them, crushed their spirits. Under these conditions only the rarest of leaders can elevate such smashed souls and conduce them to fight.

Hand in hand with the Confederate decline proceeded the Union's ascent. Countless developments precipitated this advancement, but in the Valley Campaign three directly influenced the outcome.

Clearly perceptible was Sheridan's numerical superiority. This favorable ratio never dropped below 250 percent and generally approached three times the available Confederate force in any major engagement. Early never possessed more than 10,200 infantry and 3,700 cavalry, while Sheridan's total force approached 40,000 men in these two branches.¹⁸ The disparity in these figures alone demonstrates Early's inauspicious disadvantage.

Captain Samuel D. Buck reported Early's soldiers bore a morbid fear of the fast-charging Union horsemen.¹⁹ Well-mounted, superbly led, extraordinarily equipped, and meticulously stocked with elite soldiers, Sheridan's cavalry completely outclassed its Confederate counterpart, which retained little resemblance of the confident troopers of previous years. Under the leadership of officers such as Sheridan, Custer, Merritt, and Wilson, and equipped with breech-loading, repeater carbines which overpowered Confederate weapons, the Federal cavalry corps became convinced of its invincibility.²⁰ At Winchester and Cedar Creek, Sheridan's troopers salvaged the infantry's futile efforts by transforming defeat into victory. Confident of success at Waynesboro, Sheridan did not trouble himself to augment the cavalry with infantry support. Within the context of the time and location Sheridan apparently introduced an ultimate weapon when his mounted troopers galloped into action.

The remaining factor behind the Union's ascent was that intangible quality known as leadership. After three years of inflexible trial and mortifying error, Union authorities discovered a team capable of forging the army into an instrument of victory. Although officer professionalism had progressed in all grades, the Federal force in the Valley extracted its drive from the man at the apex--General Sheridan. Tenacious, incisive, wary, and charismatic, Sheridan had an infectious enthusiasm that easily inspired officers and men to action. A lieutenant in the Signal Corps wrote to his father that Sheridan's exuberant self-confidence displayed the elements of his abilities.²¹ After Cedar Creek, an enlisted man informed his parents that the Rebels were "going to need a lot more people" to defeat Sheridan's army.²² Coupling this assured magnetism with a mastery of combined arms,²³ Sheridan conceived and executed

operational schemes designed to grind his opponent. Against such an antagonist the probability of Early's prosperity in the Valley plunged lower.

One additional source behind Early's failure needs examination, an origin definitely the most perplexing and possibly the most damaging in the final analysis. Illustrious though his reputation was, careful scrutiny of the man himself reveals deficiencies which, when magnified by the difficult circumstances of the Valley Campaign, established the fatal pattern that culminated in his defeat. After the war, Early, in declining an appointment to serve on a Virginia state political committee, stated, "I am a man of peculiar notions and do not feel like suppressing all my thoughts."²⁴ Flexibility and humility were not inherent to "Old Jube's" disposition. These tendencies not only deferred his acceptance of suggestions from subordinates, but also pressured him into finding fault outside the confines of his own judgment to an extent beyond rational analysis.

Repeatedly reproaching his cavalry for the Valley disasters,²⁵ Early never seemed to grasp that, as commander, he retained the ultimate responsibility to ensure his cavalry performed all assigned missions. Instead of providing the leadership and inspiration needed by his mounted forces, Early displayed indifference to its welfare and operational capabilities in periods of success and delivered sweeping censures in times of distress.²⁶ After Lee perceived that the main cause of Early's defeats was the inefficiency of the cavalry,²⁷ "Old Jube" apparently considered his command responsibility satisfied. This inclination demonstrates the classic example of an otherwise capable commander neglecting the value of the combined arms concept, perhaps as a result

of not properly understanding it. Under the influence of his inflexible nature Early did not try to correct this deficiency. This fault sabotaged his prospects in the Valley.

Other shortcomings appeared to haunt Early. In the war's earlier years, he displayed an inability to relate rugged terrain to his unit's disposition. At Malvern Hill and The Wilderness mazes of bad roads and heavily wooded areas confused him into atypical inaction. Superior officers had to rescue him.²⁸ He misread similar terrain at Fisher's Hill when Crook's Eighth Corps turned his left flank. Lacking sufficient numbers of soldiers to defend the four-mile defensive line, Early compromised by placing most of his units in the center in the mistaken assumption Sheridan would not assault his left flank because of the treacherous labyrinth he would encounter. Apparently, Sheridan was not frightened by the area and used Early's terrain error to his own advantage.

Lee credited Early with a tendency to deploy piecemeal his units in a conflict instead of employing his entire force to maximize its advantages (see chapter 4, page 57 and note 52). Early tacitly admitted to this fault when he stated that a skillful and energetic commander would have annihilated Rameur at Winchester while the Confederate forces were still scattered.²⁹ Other engagements during the campaign depicted this fault. Most of the offensive operations at the Monocacy were conducted by only Gordon's division. At Cedar Creek, after the morning's triumph, prior to the final halt, Early's feeble assaults against the Sixth Corps consisted of unsupported and uncoordinated brigade onslaughts. In the war's earlier campaigns the few errors in tactical employment "Old Jube" had committed were not overtly lethal due to overall Confederate superiority and redeeming actions by his superiors. In his

independent role, against a skillful adversary, however, these errors were not forgiven.

Perhaps as a result of his aversion to Federal soldiers, Early condemned Sheridan's cautious preparations as inactions of a timid commander.³⁰ In effect, the Rebel general underestimated his opponent and became overconfident. Early's assessment seems amazing in light of the audacious reputation Sheridan earned in the Western Theater, at the Battle of Yellow Tavern, and from his cavalry raid circumventing Lee's Army of Northern Virginia. "Old Jube's" judgment of this matter has to be faulted. It is further blemished when one considers that Early continued the same blunder by thinking that a timid Sheridan would not attack at Fisher's Hill and counterattack at Cedar Creek. Without question, his idea of the unworthiness of Union troops and his fixation on Sheridan's assumed incapacities reveal his inflexibility, for which his army paid the final penalty.

Although Early earned his soldiers' respect with his fighting nature and his coolness under fire, he could not win their devotion and loyalty à la Robert E. Lee because of his caustic nature. Once defeat punished him, Early's esteem declined sharply in the views of his superiors and subordinates, especially in the latter group after his biting criticisms of their actions. Even some of his peers, individuals with the most favorable opportunity to call him "friend," discreetly believed he needed to be replaced.³¹ Senator John Daniel's personal papers and General Gordon's Reminiscences are filled with Gordon's and others' accusations and recriminations concerning Early's "ineptness." Gordon's most scathing attack on "Old Jube's" reputation involved the ordered halt at Cedar Creek which allowed Sheridan to regroup and conduct

the triumphant counterattack. Despite Early's apparent sound reasoning for not continuing the assault, Gordon compiled an impressive array of statements and tactical considerations scorning the decision which hastened the "Derby day for fleet-footed racers on both sides."³² His indictment, powerful though it was, disregarded the Federal Cavalry Corps and the disarrayed condition of Early's army. Nevertheless, the power of the offensive must always be taken into account. Only adherence to this principle of war will enable a commander to overcome his adversary eventually.³³ Undoubtedly, Early recognized he had possibly committed a serious error by not adhering to the principle he generally considered inviolable. He privately instructed Major Hotchkiss, his most trusted staff officer and the courier of Early's message concerning the defeat at Cedar Creek, not to tell Lee of the mistake in halting the attack that morning. Unfortunately for Early, Hotchkiss annotated this conversation in his private journal, which was discovered after the war and published in the Official Records.

Fear of personal harm did not pressure Early into stopping that attack. Several accounts by knowledgeable individuals claim "Old Jube" had no apparent awareness of mortal danger in combat. However, perhaps he did lack courage in one respect, a defect which may have been the major factor behind his collapse.

This fault focuses on the courage of his convictions. Until given this independent command, Early had always reserved the luxury to be brashly aggressive, even careless to a degree. As Early gained responsibilities under Jackson, Richard Ewell, and finally Lee, he knew that he could depend on them for rescue in case his aggressiveness produced a situation he could not resolve. Once in the Valley, aware of the

ponderous responsibility he shouldered, "Old Jube" realized this cushion was no longer available. Saddled with this knowledge, Early may have doubted the wisdom, confidence, and boldness which had earned him renown in the war's first three years. Possibly fearing a predicament from which he would be unable to extricate his army, Early grew uncertain of the validity of his aggressive nature. It requires acute insight for one to adjust to the requirements of a position of responsibility too perplexing for him. Early may have been injected into such a situation and because of his inflexible disposition, could not make the necessary adaptation. On 30 March 1865 Jubal Early paid the personal penalty for this condition.

Without question public furor contributed to Early's relief. For instance, his raid evoked as much censure from the Southern press, the populace, and some of his military peers as it did acclaim. The Confederate Ordnance Chief confided to his diary that the "only good thing Early [did was] to arouse the waning enthusiasm in the North."³⁵ The public's criticisms initially centered around its disappointment at Early's failure to capture Washington. Southerners rejoiced when Early's cannon assaulted Fort Stevens. However, when he retreated without attacking, the citizenry vilified what it considered an act of cowardice bordering on treason. Nevertheless, a careful examiner of the Washington raid must agree with Early's decision. From a military viewpoint, Early acted wisely when he opted not to attack. His position was extremely precarious, isolated above the Potomac, beyond Lee's support. The superior forces which confronted him appeared capable and aggressive. Hunter's army was advancing in his rear to slam shut his path of retreat via the Shenandoah Valley.

Critics contend that Early should have attacked Fort Stevens immediately after he arrived. Their reasons focus on the probable actions of the green Union troops once attacked by the Confederate veterans. Critics argue that an assault would quite likely have routed these untested elements. In their flight to the rear, they probably would have inundated the Sixth Corps units moving toward Fort Stevens. The green soldier's panic may have been endemic, thus scattering the Sixth Corps. Early's army would have marched into the capital, possibly captured government officials, burned government buildings, and damaged the North psychologically.³⁶

This sequence of events expresses optimum possibilities. However, its proponents were not very perceptive, nor conscious of reality. Few Northerners realized the small size of Early's army.³⁷ Once "Old Jube" reached Washington, his opponents recognized his true strength. Thus, Early lost not only the advantage of surprise but also his aura of invincible power. A realist may find it difficult to envision how the Confederates could have physically attempted the assault on 11 July; their physical conditions prevented any energetic action. If they had managed the attempt, it is quite conceivable that the Yankees would have repulsed them. In their debilitated and demoralized state, the Rebel veterans might have even routed. Such an incident would have finished this Confederate army.

Nevertheless, if one wishes to speculate further and assume that Early attacked and routed the Union defenders, it seems evident his now thoroughly exhausted soldiers would have had to confront the experienced and fresh Sixth Corps somewhere between Fort Stevens and the city. Although it is possible that this unit would have been disorganized,

perhaps stampeded by its terrified comrades from the fort, it is unlikely. The Sixth Corps veterans had coped with similar actions at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, the North Anna River, and Cold Harbor. Expecting reinforcements during the night, these Union soldiers could have hardened their resolve to dispute the Confederate advance. Early would have thus been engaged in a major battle in which his opponent had all the advantages. The conclusion would have been inevitable. As Major Douglas stated, "If he [Early] had assaulted Washington, we would never have gotten out."³⁸

Early's critics ignore another fact. Lee's original concept envisioned Early's diversion drawing Federal units from Petersburg. "Old Jube" had to anticipate these reinforcements in the capital. He would have been negligent to imagine his soldiers could have outmarched steamers transporting units from Petersburg to the threatened city. Thus, foreseeing probable enemy troops awaiting his arrival, Early would have committed irresponsible folly by attacking the fortifications without performing a time-consuming, but vital reconnaissance. His subordinate commanders did not expect "Old Jube" to attack prematurely. The Artillery Chief stated that Early was "too prudent and sagacious" to assault the fort recklessly. Ramseur told his wife that since the heat and straggling had fatally delayed the attack, he was glad Early ordered no assault.³⁹

Two remaining points need to be mentioned. One, Early's commander expressed satisfaction with the raid's outcome. Lee never believed Washington's capture was possible.⁴⁰ Second, a trooper in a cavalry regiment summarized the Valley Army's general opinion. "[We are] satisfied Early did right because of [our] trust in him."⁴¹ Satisfying

those two areas had to alleviate some of the undue criticism from other channels.

Fickle Southern newspapers generally proclaimed their views based not only upon the results of operational events, but also the public pulse. Initially, the press lauded Early's achievements. However, as public disappointment spread, editors changed their opinions and criticized him.⁴² As late summer progressed into early fall, this criticism rapidly increased. Finally, after Cedar Creek, Southern newspapers, except for the ones in Richmond, began to censure him mercilessly. Some editors even raised the old cries that Early's "affair" with "John Barleycorn" was the sole reason behind the defeat.⁴³ Perhaps the most influential factor behind the criticism was the comparison between "Stonewall" Jackson's victorious Valley Campaign of 1862 and Early's debacle of 1864-1865. However, these critics did not take into account the conditions behind changed Confederate fortunes. For example, Jackson's cavalry was the cream of Stuart's troopers. These horsemen completely outclassed their Federal counterparts. Jackson was not outnumbered as badly as Early. In some of "Stonewall's" engagements he even commanded the larger force. Finally, Jackson's opposite numbers, Major Generals Nathaniel Banks and John Fremont, and Brigadier General James Shield, together did not match the competence of Phil Sheridan, Early's adversary. Jackson's three opponents also portrayed another advantage "Old Jube" lacked, an uncoordinated Federal command structure in the Valley.⁴⁴ One finds it difficult to imagine that Jackson, faced with a similar situation, would have fared much better.

Thus, it appears that an uninformed and frustrated public simply expected too much. The populace, intolerant and impatient from the

realization, disappointment, and fear of impending doom, demanded scapegoats. Early, attempting to accomplish "the tasks expected by an exacting public,"⁴⁵ suited the requirement.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. Early, Memoir, p. 125.
2. Marye, p. 472. After the war Lee told Early that he had "exhibited high intelligence, sagacity, bravery, and untiring devotion to the cause." Robert E. Lee to Jubal A. Early, 22 November 1865, Early Papers.
3. John A. Campbell to John C. Breckinridge, 5 March 1865, Campbell-Colston Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. Breckinridge, Early's old lieutenant at the Battle of Winchester, was the newly appointed Confederate Secretary of War. Campbell served as the Assistant Secretary of War.
4. Jubal A. Early to Daniel H. Hill, 2 August 1885, Hill Papers.
5. Jeffry Wert, "Old Jubilee's Last Battle," Civil War Times Illustrated 16, no. 5 (1977): 22.
6. John A. Campbell to John C. Breckinridge, 5 March 1865, Campbell-Colston Papers.
7. Freeman, Lieutenants, 3:xiii-xiv, 513, 598, 614. Out of sixteen generals in the Second Corps present for duty at the start of this campaign, four died in action, four suffered debilitating wounds, and two became prisoners. Private Berkeley's artillery battery left Petersburg with four lieutenants. By the time of the Battle of Winchester, three were dead and one was missing in action. Berkeley, 19 September 1864, p. 98.
8. Gorgas, pp. 141-142; Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 7-8. The Confederate government attempted to correct the cavalry situation with legislation near the end of the war. The legislators were too late. Confederate States of America, Congress, House, A Bill To Increase The Efficiency of The Cavalry, 23 February 1865.
9. Michael C. Adams, Our Masters the Rebels (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 193.
10. Maurice Melton, "Disloyal Confederates," Civil War Times Illustrated 16, no. 5 (1977): 14.
11. Harry N. Scheiber, "The Pay of Confederate Troops and Problems of Demoralization: A Case of Administrative Failure," in Battles Lost

and Won, ed. John T. Hubbell (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975), pp. 229-230.

12. John A. Campbell to John C. Breckinridge, 5 March 1865, Campbell-Colston Papers; Robert E. Lee to Jefferson Davis, 25 February 1865, Lee Telegrams.

13. William B. Pettit to his parents, 24 October and 30 October 1864, Pettit Papers.

14. Bob Saussy to Joachim R. Saussy, 23 October 1864, Joachim R. Saussy Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

15. Berkeley, 18 February 1865, p. 119.

16. Wert, p. 22.

17. John M. Daniel, The Richmond Examiner during the War (New York: for the Author, 1868; reprint edition, New York: Arno Press, 1970), pp. 216-217.

18. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 60-61; Early, Narrative, pp. 415-416.

19. Samuel D. Buck, "Battle of Fisher's Hill," Confederate Veteran 2, no. 11 (1894): 338.

20. Thomas Carter to John W. Daniel, 28 November 1894, Daniel Papers; W. R. Cox to John W. Daniel, 3 December 1905, Daniel Papers. It should be noted that even after Cedar Creek, Union infantrymen dreaded contact with Early's army. One wrote his family that his unit did not "want to fight Early's people." John M. Olivett to his sister, 18, 30 January 1865, John M. Olivett Papers, Duke University, Durham, N.C.

21. Oscar B. Ireland to his father, 5 November, 1864, Ireland Papers.

22. Nathan G. Dye to his parents, 25 October 1864, Dye Papers.

23. The combined arms concept utilizes the capabilities, and subsequently nullifies the limitations, of the three combat arms, infantry, cavalry, and artillery, into a common operational plan.

24. "The Virginia Convention," New York Times, 3 September 1871, p. 1.

25. Early developed this animosity during the winter of 1863 when cavalry operations proved lax and unrewarding. Official Records, series 1, vol. 29, pt. 1, p. 970.

26. Thomas Carter to John W. Daniel, 19 November 1894, Daniel Papers. Early's attempt at reorganization of the cavalry precipitated a small political crisis which required the Secretary of War to resolve.

James A. Seddon to F. McMullens, undated, James A. Seddon Letters, Duke University, Durham, N.C. In addition, after Robert Ransom became incapacitated due to a physical ailment, Early never chose another commander under whom to consolidate the several cavalry units.

27. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 558-559.

28. Vandiver, pp. 21, 23.

29. Early, Memoir, p. 91.

30. Early, Narrative, p. 415.

31. Gordon, Reminiscences, p. 365. Even after the triumphal march to Washington "Old Jube's" soldiers could not show him reverence. J. C. Featherston, "Gen. Jubal Anderson Early," Confederate Veteran 26, no. 10 (1918): 430-432; Gorgas, p. 147.

32. While in the Senate, Daniel of North Carolina wrote a considerable number of articles for the Southern Historical Society Papers. In this capacity he maintained frequent correspondence with ex-Confederates. Gordon served under Early throughout the war. Both men's ambitious natures clashed repeatedly and culminated in near open warfare at Gettysburg, The Wilderness, and Cedar Creek. Gordon, Reminiscences, p. 352; Hotchkiss, 29 October 1864, p. 241.

33. United States Military Academy, Jomini, Clausewitz and Schlieffen (West Point, N.Y.: Department of Military Art and Engineering, 1967), p. 62.

34. Official Records, series 1, vol. 43, pt. 1, pp. 562-563; Hotchkiss, 23 October 1864, p. 241.

35. Gorgas, p. 126.

36. Swindler, p. 330; Edward J. Stackpole, "The Day the Rebels Could Have Marched into the White House," Civil War Times 2, no. 10 (1969): 6.

37. Douglas, p. 294.

38. Ibid., p. 295.

39. A. L. Long, "Early's Valley Campaign," in The Confederate Soldier in the Civil War, ed. Ben La Bree (Louisville Ky.: The Courier-Journal Job Printing Co., 1895), p. 218; Douglas, pp. 295-296; Major General Stephen Ramseur to his wife, 15 July and 23 July 1864, Ramseur Papers. An interesting side note offered by Bradley Johnson stated that John W. Garret, the president of the B & O Railroad, did as much to prevent Washington's capture as anyone. His energy and decisiveness made trains available to carry Wallace's troops to the Monocacy and delay Early for the one day. Johnson, p. 220.

40. Official Records, series 1, vol. 37, pt. 1, p. 346; Early, Battles and Leaders, p. 492.

41. Bennette Diary, 13 July 1864.

42. Vandiver, p. 173; Colonel Thomas Carter to John W. Daniel, 18 December 1864, Daniel Papers; Andrews, South, p. 409; Edmondston, p. 593.

43. Andrews, South, pp. 423-425.

44. Stackpole, Sheridan, pp. 392-394; Early, Memoir, p. 118; Golladay, p. 33; Daniel, "Early," p. 318; Vandiver, pp. 175-179; William E. Peters to Jubal Early, 1890, Early, Narrative, p. 474.

45. Thomas G. Jones to John W. Daniel, 3 July 1904, Daniel Papers. Apparently the only state political supporter of Early at this time was ex-Governor John Letcher who deemed Early a "good officer." John Letcher to J. Hierholzer, 3 December 1864, cited in "Reminiscences," New York Tribune, 29 October 1899, p. 9; "Letters of John Letcher to J. Hierholzer, 1864-1865," William and Mary Quarterly, ser. 2, 8 (1928): 138.

CHAPTER VII
THE FINAL ROLL CALL

If Jubal Early had fallen at Cold Harbor or at Washington, he would have been near unanimously considered one of the greatest of the Confederate generals. Most observers believed him the only commander, following "Stonewall's" death, capable of leading the summer diversion.¹ His Valley Campaign is important in military annals because it is a sterling example of what a small, mobile unit, driven by determined, resourceful, and energetic leadership, can accomplish. As a game of bluff and ruse, the venture has few equals. Unfortunately for "Old Jube," the ironic legacy of this successful gamble brought him disaster and not victory. Lincoln's administration, to continue its political, and thus military, war effort, had to extinguish the Southern benefits of Early's victories. In the end, "Old Jube's" brilliant moment in military history made no difference to the war's final outcome.

And she speaks in a voice that is sad as death
There is duty still to be done,
Tho' the trumpet of onset has spent its breadth,
And the Battle been lost and won.²

Self-proclaimed as "a genuine original and a true character,"³ Jubal Anderson Early evoked paradoxical reactions from those who encountered him. Though he was much maligned and misunderstood during the last stages of the Civil War, his reputation during the romanticism of the "Lost Cause" soared to the heights his wartime fame attained.

Described by the New York Times as "One who can neither forget nor learn anything," Early never rejected, disclaimed, or apologized for the cause for which he fought.⁴ This spirit, displaying the humiliated pride and anger induced by his military annihilation,⁵ stemmed from the peculiarities of his complex personality. Characterized by one contemporary as possessing the individualism and eccentricity of John Randolph, the resolution and self-will of Andrew Jackson,⁶ this figure of indomitable spirit, "intense, brave, and perplexing as any man in the service,"⁷ hacked a swath across the pages of military history with a generalship that invites critical analysis. He was decisive and energetic in the execution of his duties,⁸ but his own peculiarities destined him to an unpropitious fate. In the inherent picturesque character of the South, with bugles blaring and colors unfurling, Early's brilliancy failed him. An anguished, yet triumphal, scene in a small farmhouse near Appomatox, Virginia, completed his fall. The old fighter would order no more charges.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

1. Featherston, p. 430; William A. Payne to John W. Daniel, 20 February 1894, Daniel Papers. It should be noted that Jackson admired profusely Early's soldierly qualities. Hunter McGuire, "General Thomas J. Jackson," Southern Historical Society Papers 19 (1891): 312. McGuire served as the Chief Surgeon of the Second Corps.

2. Paul Hamilton Hayne, The Broken Battalions (Baltimore: Committee of the Maryland Line Table, 1885), p. 5.

3. Davis, p. 5.

4. "His Memoir of Last Year of War," New York Times, 7 January 1867, p. 1; "General Early at Winchester Again," New York Tribune, 7 June 1889, p. 1; Jubal A. Early, "Address before Survivors Association of South Carolina, 10 November 1871," Dawson Pamphlets 3, no. 16 (1872): 37.

5. Clara Morris, "A Chip of the Old Confederacy," Cosmopolitan Magazine 35 (1903): 545.

6. Marye, p. 465.

7. Thomas G. Jones to John W. Daniel, 3 July 1904, Daniel Papers.

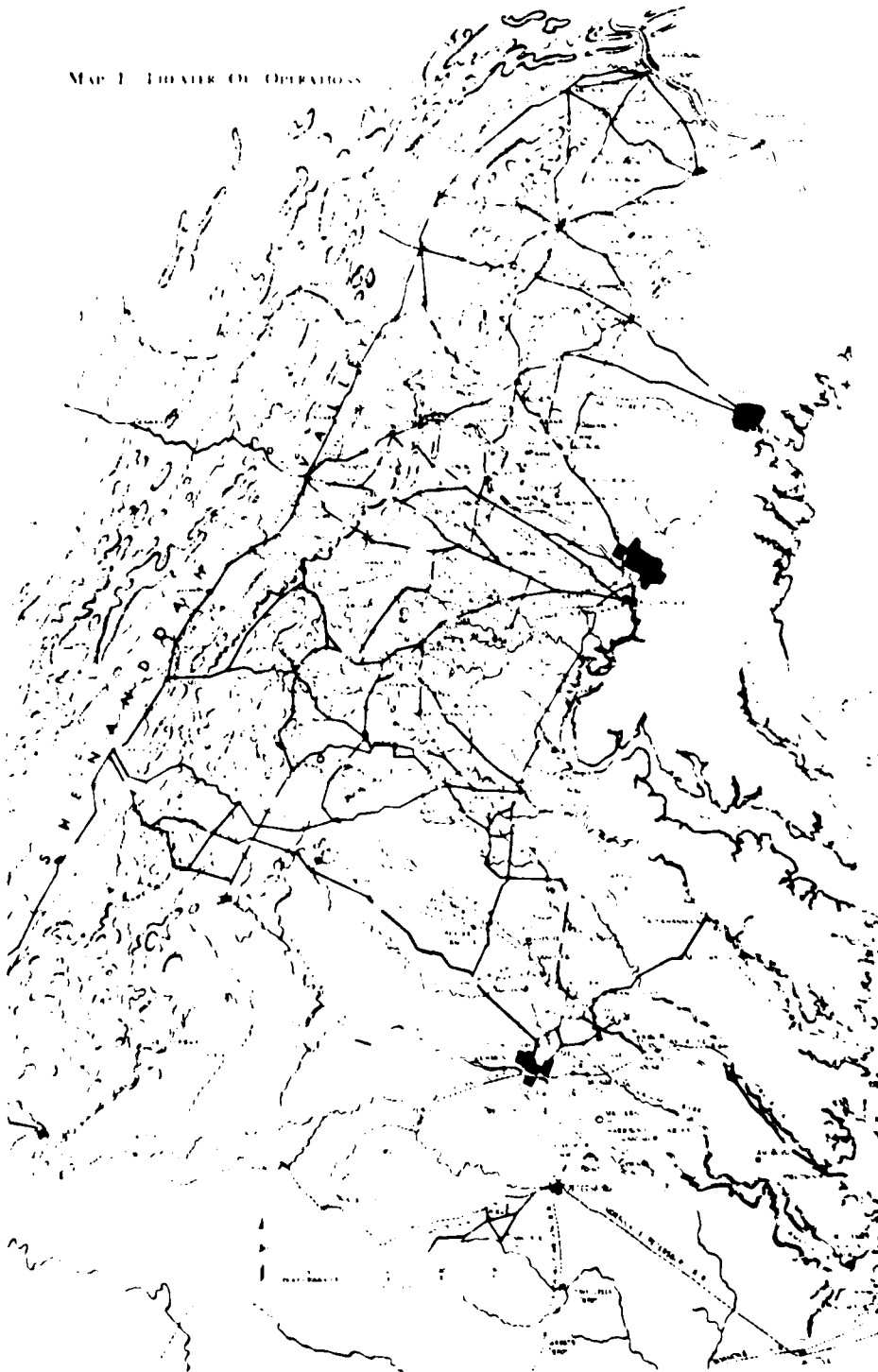
8. Peter W. Hairston to his wife, 20 September 1863, Peter W. Hairston Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

APPENDIX

Diagrams are reproduced from Edward J. Stackpole, Sheridan in the Shenandoah (Harrisburg, Pa.: The Stackpole, Co., 1961). Civil War features in them are from George B. Davis, Leslie J. Perry, and Joseph W. Kirkley, The Official Military Atlas of the Civil War (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Press, 1891-1895).

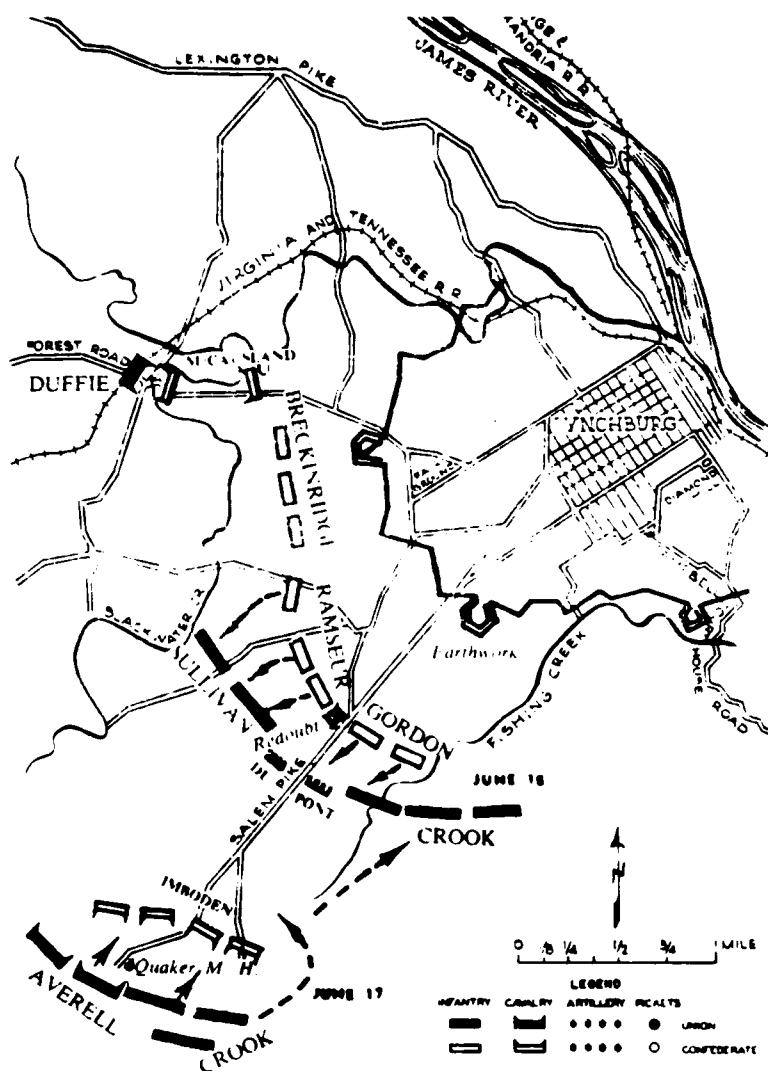
Diagram 1

MAP 1 THEATER OF OPERATIONS



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Diagram 2



MAP 2 BATTLE OF LYNCHBURG.

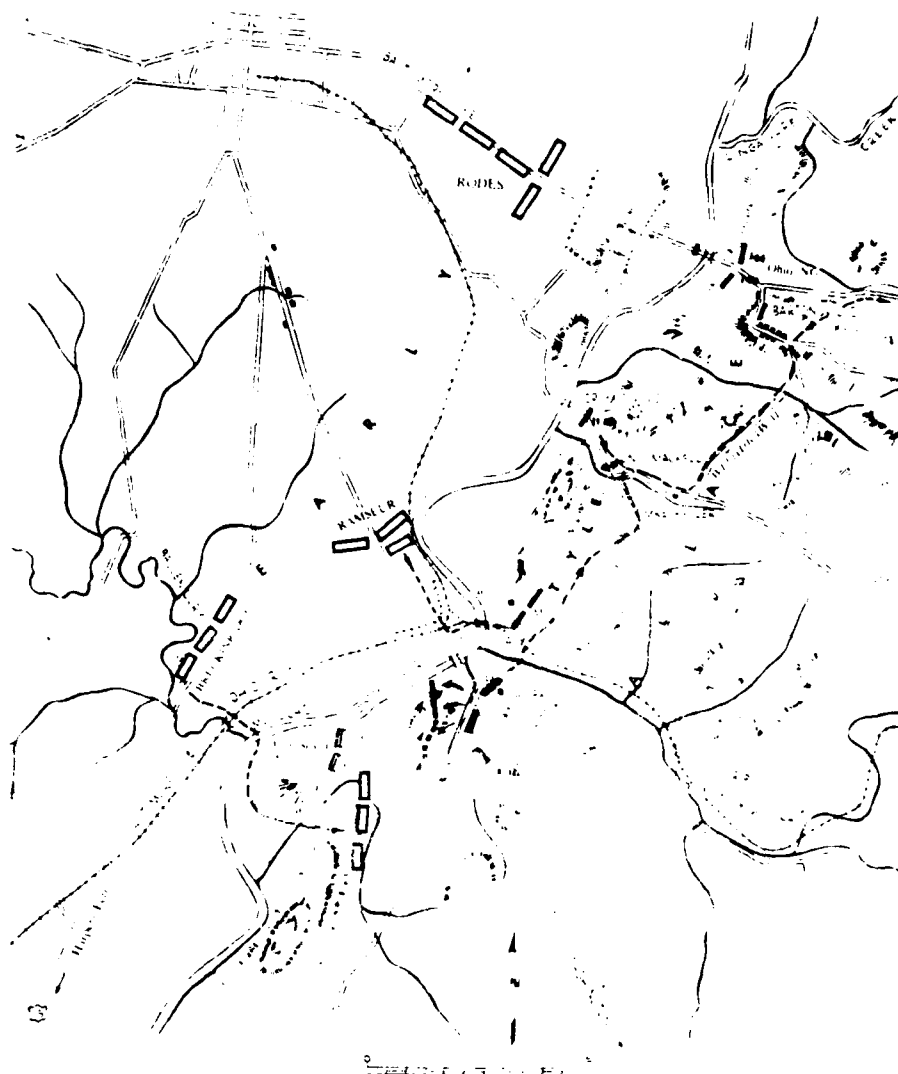
Near the Quaker Meeting House is shown the action on June 17, 1864, in which the Confederate cavalry under Imboden, attempting to delay Hunter's advance on Lynchburg, is driven back by Averell and Crook. On this day Breckinridge's infantry occupies the earthworks which have been thrown up to protect the city against attacks from the river.

The action on June 18 is shown on the map. On this day the Union forces under Sullivan and Hall, from the north, and Crook, from the south, drive the Confederate cavalry out of the earthworks and into the river. The Union forces then occupy the earthworks and the city of Lynchburg. The map shows the Union forces occupying the earthworks and the city of Lynchburg. The map shows the Union forces occupying the earthworks and the city of Lynchburg.

The map is based on the following sources:

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HISTORICAL RECORDS OF THE WAR

Diagram 3



MAP 3. BATTLE OF THE MONOCACY, JULY 9, 1861

The basic topography of this map is from a U. S. Geological Survey modern map, scale 1:21,000, and all Civil War features are from the Union and Confederate maps, Plates 83 and 94, of the Atlas.

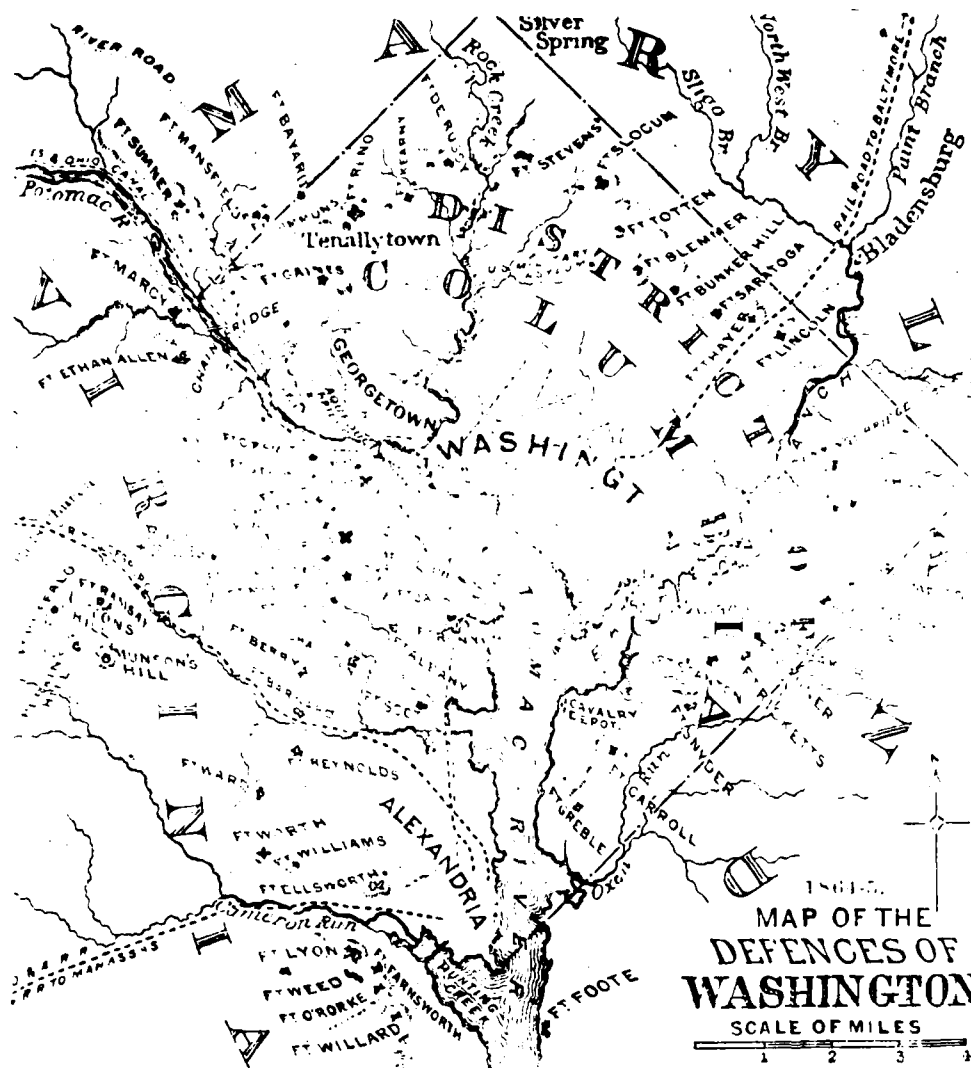
The situation shown here occurred at about 2:30 p.m. when Gordon launched his assault on Ricketts. The battle was over by 4 p.m., the Federal route of withdrawal being shown.

Bradley Johnson's brigade of Confederate cavalry, a part of Early's force, is not shown on this map. Early on the morning of the 9th Johnson moved northeast from Frederick on his mission of cutting the railroads between Baltimore and Harrisburg and Philadelphia.

Frederick, Maryland was often called Frederick City, and this name appears on some of the contemporary maps.

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Diagram 4



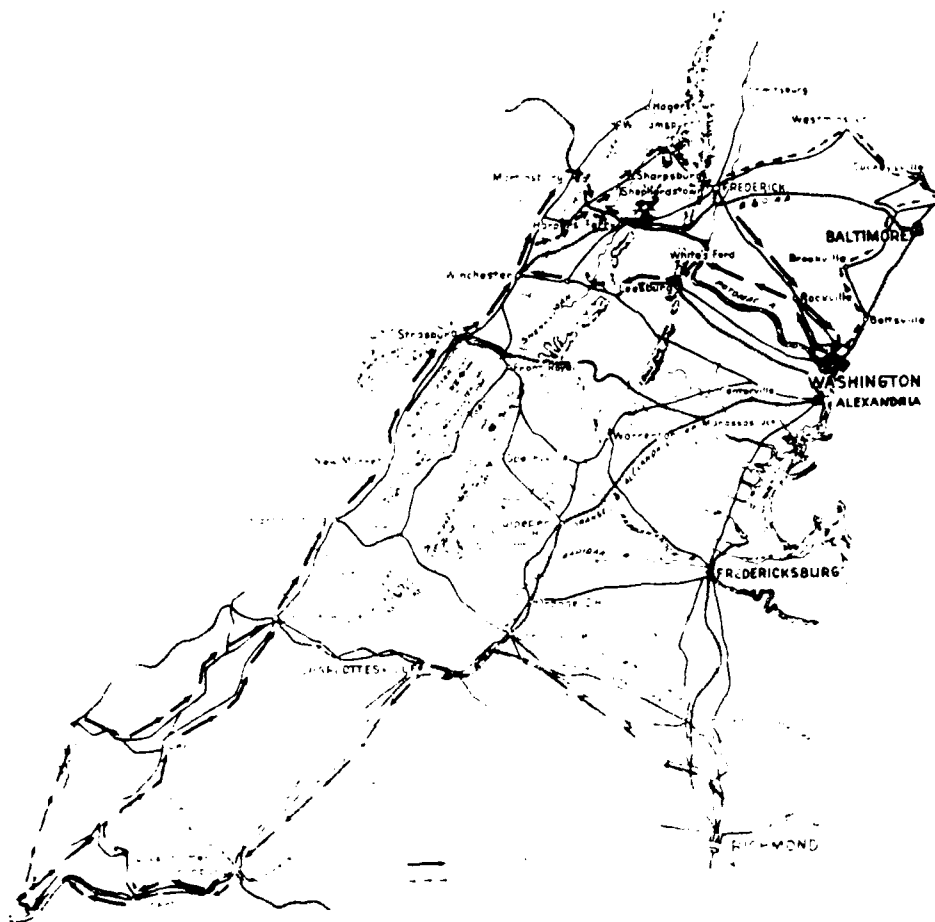
MAR 4 WASHINGTON AND HIS DEFENSES IN 1864

The dotted line running south from Silver Spring (top center) is the present Georgia Avenue, an extension of Seventh Street. A number of the earth forts comprising the Civil War defensive works around Washington are discernible today in various wooded areas where buildings have not been erected. In recent years Fort Stevens has been restored, and is readily accessible. Its location is shown on the maps of Washington. Though it was surrounded by pastures, fields, and woods in 1864, today it is well within the built-up portion of the city.

The dotted line runs from downtown Georgetown through Fernaldtown to Wisconsin Avenue at the Rock Creek Parkway, now called Fernald, located in the center of the town. The road was built by the Fernald family from Wisconsin Avenue.

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Diagram 5

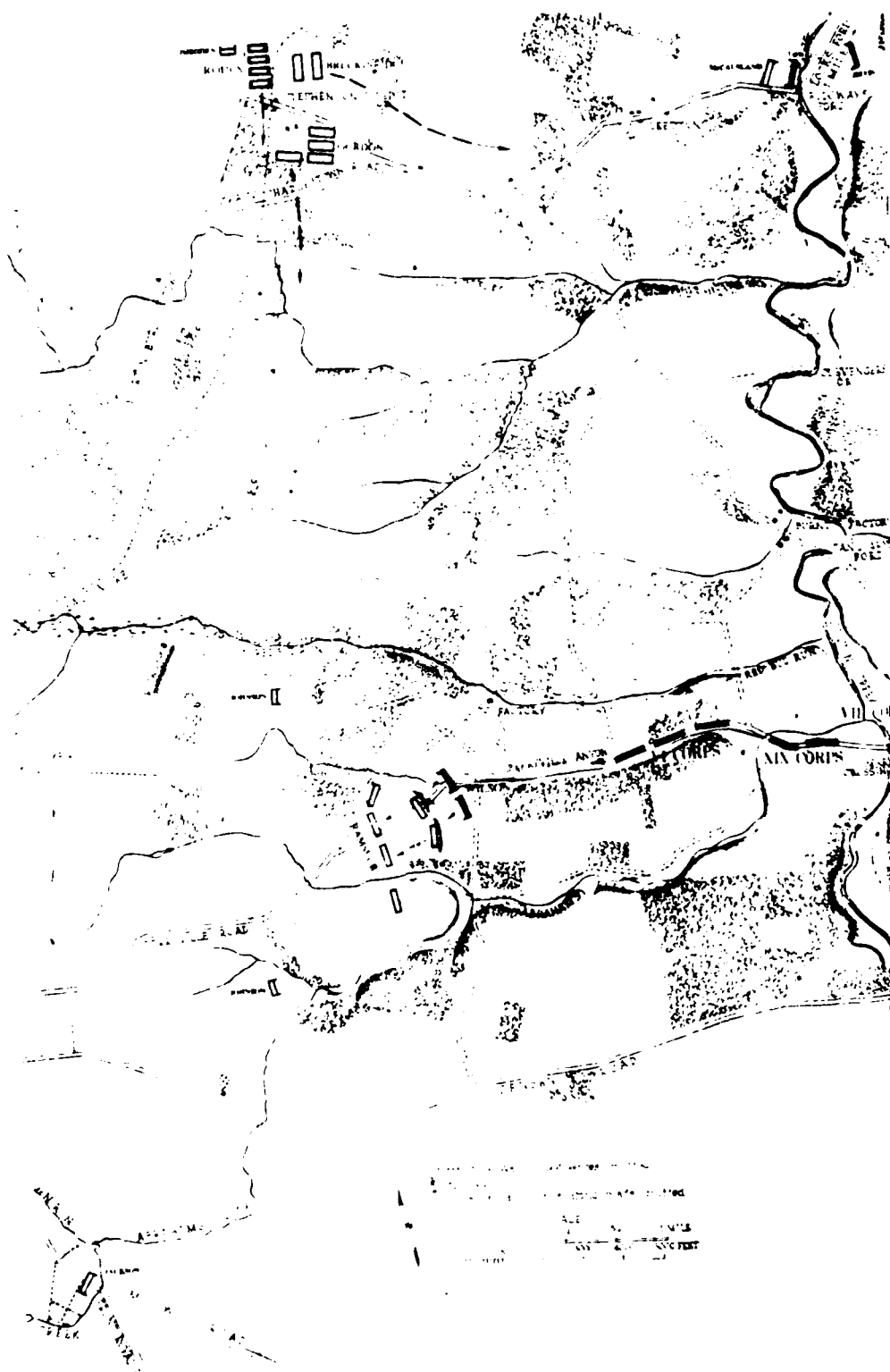


MAP 5. EARLY'S ROUTE, JUNE 13-JULY 21, 1864

This is based on a contemporary map (Plate 81, 4, 6) which, despite some inaccuracies, is convenient for portraying Early's march to Lynchburg, thence to Harpers Ferry, Frederick, and Washington, and return to the Valley. Except for Bradley Johnson's excursion from Frederick toward Baltimore, only the routes of the main infantry columns are shown.

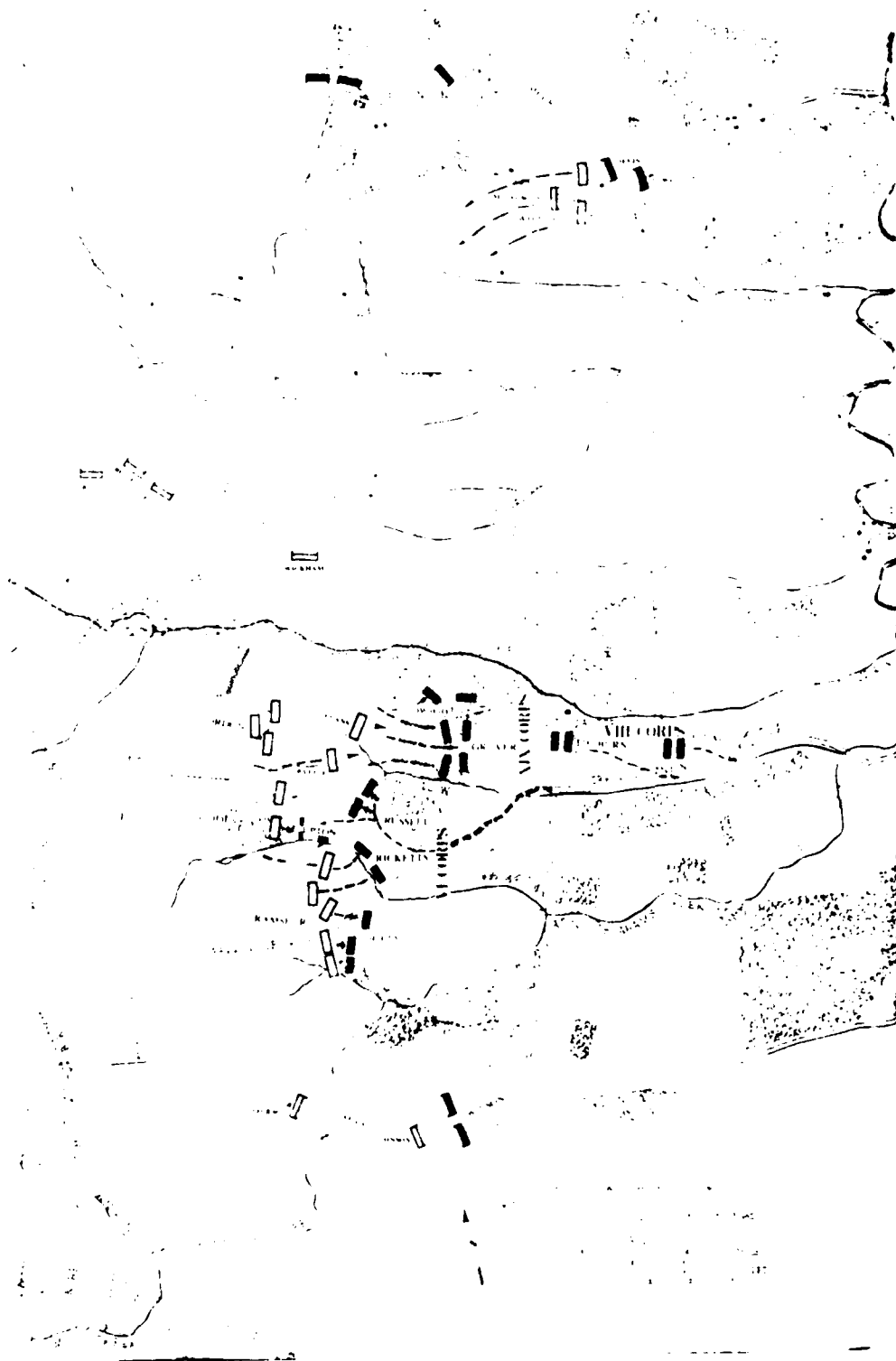
As a matter of interest, this map shows two terrain features, which are usually mispronounced in the North: Opequon and Aquia; in Virginia these are called Opeckon and Ahkwah.

Diagram 6



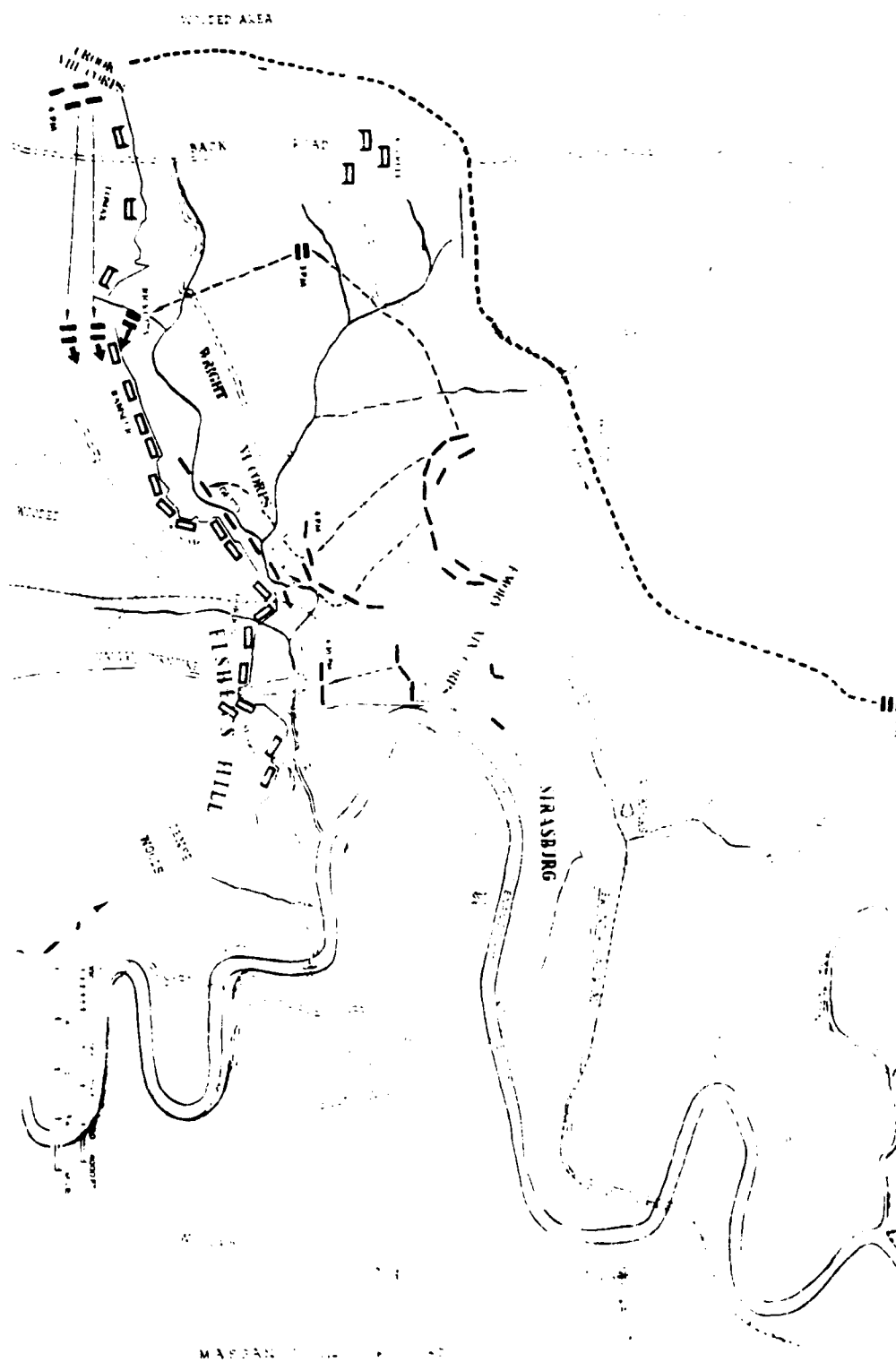
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Diagram 7



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FROM OUR FURNISH TO YOU

Diagram 8



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Diagram 9

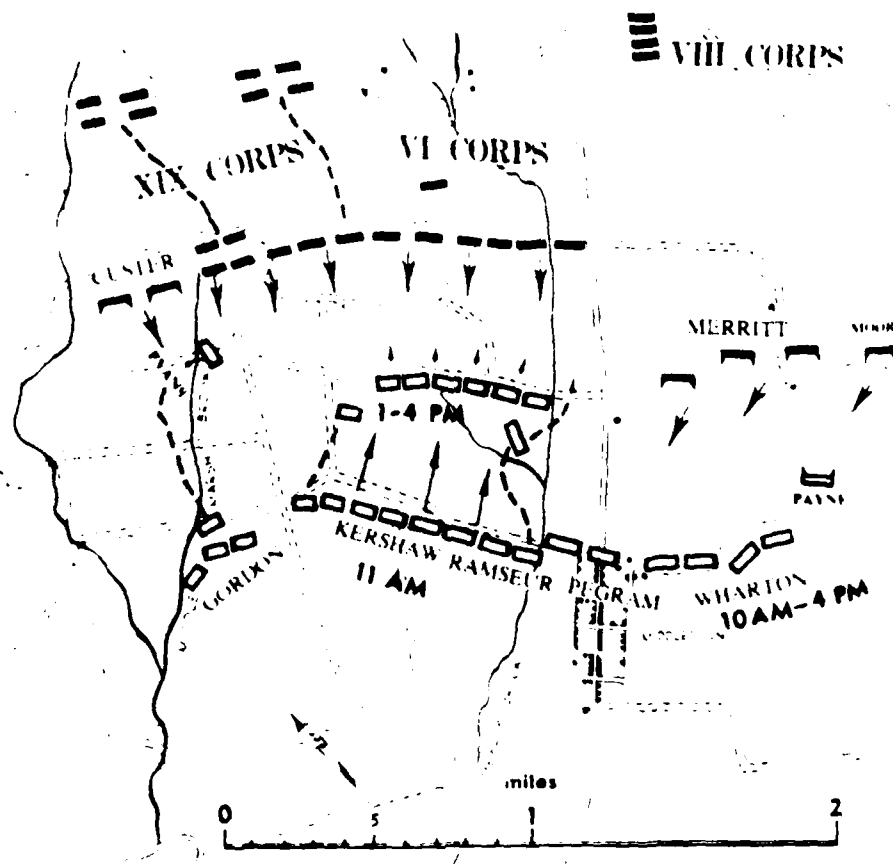


Map 12 Battle of Cedar Creek, October 19, 1864 - Opening Phase

This shows the routes taken by the Confederates to their jumpoff positions and the start of the attack is portrayed. The weight of the initial assault fell on Crook's VIII Corps, then on the XIX Corps, both of which were forced north, the VIII in great confusion. The Confederate demonstration at Cuppes Ford lacked authenticity and was easily foiled off by part of Custer's division. This left the bulk of Custer's division and all of Merritt's available for close-in support of the Federal infantry. Two of Dupont's batteries, one in front of Thoburn's division. The one on the east, Battery D, 1st Pennsylvania Light, was overrun, the other, Battery R, 7th U. S., and the third, Battery E, 1st Ohio, shown pos. south of the camp, were withdrawn along the pike to the 21 position, where they rendered good service.

This map is based on the Gillespie map mentioned under Map 11. For the Hotchkiss map, Plate S2, 96, was also consulted for Confederate dispositions.

Diagram 10



MAP 15. BATTLE OF CEDAR CREEK, SECOND PHASE

By 11 a.m. the Confederates had advanced to the line which runs perpendicular to the turnpike just north of Middletown, where Early held them for several hours despite the impatience of Gordon and other commanders to continue the attack. Meantime Sheridan had arrived from Winchester after his famous ride and had reformed his line of battle on the position established by Getty. Merritt's cavalry division and Moore's brigade were on the left flank, but at 11 a.m. Custer was shifted back to the right flank.

At about 3:15 p.m. the three Confederate divisions on their left made a feeble attack. Wharton and Pegram not participating. During this short advance a gap developed between Kershaw and Gordon which was exploited by the Federals when they launched a general attack at 4 p.m. This assault resulted in driving the Confederates from the field in increasing disorder.

The development of this final advance, and the pursuit that followed constitute the final phase of the battle, which cannot well be portrayed graphically. The Union victory was complete and brought the campaign virtually to a close.

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